▪ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1

'Badjao,' 1957 Southeast Asia Filmfest winner, makes cable debut

▪ SPORTS / A17

Woods wins Buick Open for 4th time

Do you have a story to tell about Edsa I? The INQUIRER is looking for those untold stories (photos, too) that contributed, no matter how small, to the first People Power in 1986 that so stunned the world and inspired and emboldened people in chains everywhere to break free. The contributions that will be selected by the editors will be used for the INQUIRER's special celebration of the 20th anniversary of Edsa I. **Send your contribution, with your address and contact number, not later than Feb. 15 to fdelmundo@inquirer.com.ph**

Joker sees something sinister in PCGG silence

By Philip C. Tubeza

"THERE IS SOMETHING SINISTER IN THIS."

This was what Sen. Joker Arroyo said yesterday after Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Camilo Sabio chose to have the proposed PCGG budget slashed to zero rather than answer questions on whether President Macapagal-Arroyo authorized negotiations to set-

JOKER/ A6

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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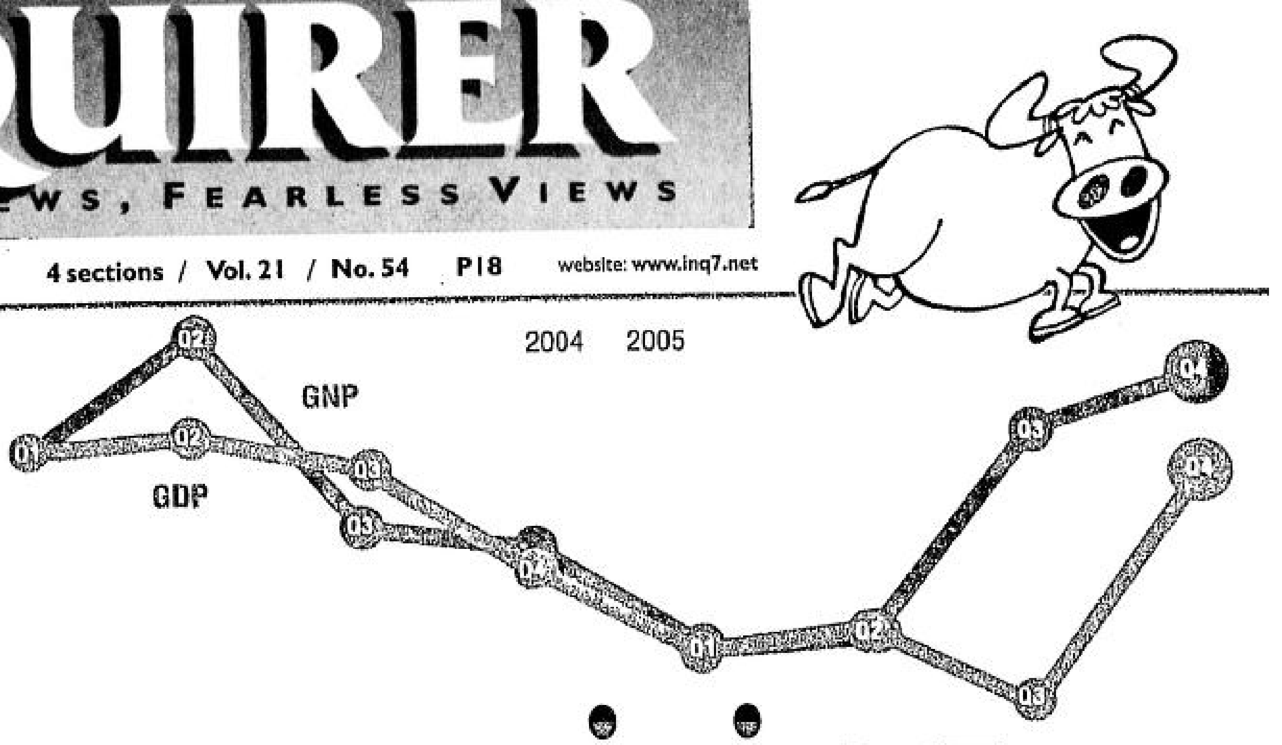
GDP & GNP GROWTH RATES

1ST TO 4TH QUARTERS, 2004-2005



RP growth slower but surprising

Economy expands 5.1 percent

By Michelle V. Ramos

HIGH OIL PRICES, sluggish exports and weak agricultural output capped Philippine economic growth at 5.1 percent in 2005 from 6 percent the previous year, officials announced yesterday.

Even so, most market analysts were pleasantly surprised the economy surpassed their average forecast of a full-year growth of only 4.8 percent—thanks to an estimated $10.85 billion in remittances from overseas Filipino workers that spurred consumer spending.

The Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP), the value of goods and services produced within the country, last year rose 5.1 percent to P5.379 trillion. The gross national product (GNP), which includes remittances of OFWs and other income from abroad, slowed to 5.7 percent from 6.2 percent in 2004.

The agriculture sector, which employs nearly four in 10 Filipinos, "moderately expanded" by 2 percent compared to 4.9 percent in 2004 due to the El Niño dry spell that tempered the growth of crops, livestock and poultry, Economic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos told a news conference.

The key services sector also eased to 6.3 percent from 7.1 percent, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSDB).

But the industrial sector expanded by 5.3 percent from 5.2

RP GROWTH/ A6

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo troops the line during the 15th anniversary celebration of the Philippine National Police in Camp Crame. Like she did earlier with the Armed Forces, she promised P1 billion in benefits to PNP personnel. PCPO-MALACAÑANG PHOTO

GMA presents ₱1B in benefits to cops

By Christine O. Avendaño and Luige A. del Puerto

PROFUSELY THANKING THEM for their support amid new coup threats, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced a P1-billion package of benefits for the national police.

"I needed you. I still need you, because the seas were often rough and the wind was in our face. But because of you, the police, were always there for me," the President said.

In a surprise visit to Camp Aguinaldo last week, the general headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Ms Arroyo announced that she was authorizing the release of P1.5 billion for housing projects for soldiers.

At the 15th anniversary celebration of the Philippine National Police, she announced that the police would also benefit from housing and scholarship programs her administration would implement.

"We want to tell each and every member of this police force, you are not forgotten," the President said.

Aside from inaugurating a residential condominium for the PNP,

GMA PRESENTS/ A6

Mine firms warn of job, capital risks

By Christine Gaylican, Blanche S. Rivera and TJ Burgonio

UP TO 10 MILLION PEOPLE ARE at risk of economic dislocation over calls by Catholic bishops to repeal the Mining Act of 1995 and cancel all existing mining permits, Benjamin Philip Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, said yesterday.

"The CBCP statement is extreme and sweeping. They do not realize the actual impact of what they are seeking," Romualdez said a day after the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issued a statement declaring that the mining law "destroys life" and produces "evil effects."

The bishops cited risks to potential "massive environmental damage" and the industry's supposed failure to uplift the lives of residents of resource-rich areas.

At a press conference, Romualdez, the president of Benguet Corp., said all forms of investment, not only in the mining sector, would be affected should the legislature and other branches of government be swayed by the CBCP.

"If there will be such an impact, the labor sector will be first

MINE FIRMS/ A4

Abalos, other Comelec execs reject quit call anew

By Jerome Aning

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Benjamin Abalos made it clear yesterday he and his fellow Comelec commissioners intended to hang on to their jobs despite a call from the country's bishops for them to consider resigning.

"I answered that (issue) a long time ago," Abalos said, referring to his rejection last month of a call by the Senate for him and other Comelec commissioners to resign over the allegedly fraudulent purchase of automated vote counting machines worth P1.3 billion.

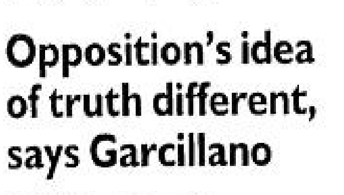
Abalos, in a phone interview, said he shared the hope of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) that the Comelec would be transformed into a poll body "beyond reproach."

"Yes, there should be a continuous investigation," Abalos said.

Aside from the MegaPacific scandal involving the counting machines, the reputation of the Comelec has been damaged by the "Hello Garci" tape controversy centering on allegations of vote rigging during the 2004 elections.

Abalos reiterated that he and Commissioners Resurreccion Borra, Florentio Tuason Jr.,

ABALOS/ A6


ANO PA BANG TRUTH ANG GUSTO NILA?

Opposition's idea of truth different, says Garcillano

By Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

THE MAN AT THE CENTER OF allegations that President Macapagal-Arroyo had cheated in the 2004 presidential election doesn't believe that there will ever be closure to the "Hello Garci" scandal.

"What closure? There will be no closure for as long as the op-

OPPOSITION'S/ A4

CBCP plea for truth runs into brick wall

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgonio

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' DEmand for the truth in the controversies surrounding President Macapagal-Arroyo appeared yesterday to have run into a brick wall.

Reactions from Malacañang and Congress were solidly behind Sunday's call by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

But each of the protagonists cited one reason or another for the absence of closure to the scandals that nearly unseated the 58-year-old President last year.

In its strongest and most categorical statement yet, the 119-member CBCP declared at the close of its semi-annual plenary at the weekend that the search for truth must be "pursued relentlessly," noting that previous efforts had been burdened by "evasion and obstruction."

In reply, Malacañang washed its hands of any involvement in the aborted "Hello Garci" probe and said that it was solely Congress that decided not to pursue the impeachment case against Ms Arroyo over charges she stole the May 2004 presidential election. *(See related story on this page.)*

CBCP/ A4

BISHOPS led by Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal (right) and opposition personalities join a "Silent Majority" prayer rally at the Quezon Memorial Circle. JOAN BONDOC

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/01/31/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FrontPage

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VAT hike takes effect tomorrow

By Ronnel W. Domingo and Michael Lim Ubac

WITH PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO set to raise the value-added tax (VAT) to 12 percent from 10 percent tomorrow, the Department of Trade said yesterday the increase would have a "very slight effect" on the prices of basic goods.

Still, Trade Secretary Peter Favila convened the National Price Coordinating Council yesterday "to ensure smooth coordination" among government agencies in mitigating any impact of the VAT hike.

During the meeting, Favila reiterated his call for traders and manufacturers to exercise restraint in any price hikes. He said the stronger peso and stable import costs should keep drastic price adjustments at bay.

"(I am again appealing to business operators), especially since the current strength of the peso is enabling manufacturers to import raw materials at better prices," he said.

For their part, representatives of food manufacturers and retailers said there would be no immediate price hikes as they would first have to study the capacity of the market to absorb higher prices.

The current value of the peso against the dollar is allowing businesses to absorb the impact of the VAT hike, they said.

Favila said government monitoring showed that prices of most basic commodities remained stable relative to their levels before the implementation of the reformed VAT law.

The reformed VAT expanded the coverage of the tax to previously exempted goods and services.

Citing a Department of Agriculture study on the movement of prices in the weeks before and after Nov. 1 when the reformed VAT took effect, Favila said prices of most agricultural and fishery commodities in Metro Manila remained at pre-reformed VAT levels.

But a militant member of the political opposition warned that without the release of official economic data, President Arroyo could not push through with the VAT increase tomorrow.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño blamed Malacañang "for conditioning the minds of the Filipinos that a VAT increase will be implemented by Wednesday when in fact official statistics are not yet ready to justify the increase."

Casiño said Ms Arroyo should exercise prudence in the matter.

"Pending the official release of the National Income Accounts for the previous year, we still don't know if Malacañang has met the conditions mandated by Republic Act 9337 (the expanded VAT Law) for raising the VAT from 10 percent to 12 percent," Casiño said.

The law provides that before the President can raise the VAT rate by 2 percentage points, the following conditions must be met: That the VAT collection as a percentage of the GDP exceeded 2.8 percent the previous year and the government deficit as a percentage of the GDP exceeded 1.5 percent for 2005.

"I doubt if the figures will be ready by Wednesday," said Casiño, who was invited to yesterday's Neda briefing on the 4th Quarter National Income Accounts.

Using the GDP forecast for 2005, the Bureau of Treasury estimated the government deficit as of November 2005 at 1.9 percent, way above the 1.5 percent of GDP deficit requirement.

The Department of Finance estimated the GDP at current prices will be P5.3 to 6.3 trillion.

"Based on these estimates, however, the government will most likely fail to meet the required VAT collection of 2.8 percent of the GDP for 2005," Casiño said.

Next five months critical to GMA survival—Gonzalez

'The volcano is the impeachment complaint'

By Armand N. Nocum

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL Gonzalez warned yesterday that the next five months would be a "critical period" for the survival of the Arroyo administration as the opposition—now wiser in the wake of its failed bid to impeach the President last year—may take another crack at unseating the President, thereby strengthening the hand of military coup plotters.

"The volcano there is the impeachment complaint," Gonzalez said, describing how the filing of a new impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo this year could fan military adventurism.

Critical period

Gonzalez said the capture of escaped alleged Oakwood mutiny leader Capt. Nicanor Faeldon could cause anti-Arroyo forces in the military to lie low or take "drastic" moves against the President and her government.

"The next five months is still a critical period ... That is how we look at the situation in view of the fact that we know that there will be another impeachment (complaint and it) can stir the hornets' nest again," he said.

"This time, we don't know how prepared they are to muster the 79 signatures or whatever (is required to sent the impeachment complaint automatically to the Senate)," he said, adding that the mere deliberation of the issue could be enough to agitate Congress and the general populace.

Opposition failed

Last year, the President survived an impeachment bid after the opposition failed to get the required number of votes to move the impeachment complaint forward.

"The impeachment complaint is always a problem. If they get the 79 votes, they can already forward it to the Senate," he said. "The impeachment will create destabilization."

Renegade soldiers

Gonzalez said the capture of Faeldon "could inflame the minds of these renegade soldiers" or force them underground, fearful that the "long arm of the government will get them."

Following the escape of Faeldon and four Magdalo officers, the President had changed the leadership of the Presidential Security Group, fueling speculation that she may be afraid of being bodily harmed by sympathizers of the Magdalo men.

Coup threats remain, says AFP spokesman

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan
and Christine O. Avendaño

THREATS TO DESTABILIZE THE government remain despite the arrest of renegade Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, a military spokesman said yesterday.

Although he would not give details, Col. Tristan Kison said a shadowy group had been trying to recruit junior officers.

"There was intent but the group lacked the capability," Kison told reporters.

"We discovered the recruitment at a very early stage but managed to nip it in the bud," he added.

Asked if the threat of a coup still remained, Kison said: "The threat is always there."

His comments came just days after the recapture of Faeldon, who was among 300 officers and men who launched a failed rebellion against President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2003.

Kison would not say whether Faeldon himself was part of a wider conspiracy to recruit junior officers.

Escape

Faeldon escaped in December from military detention, embarrassing the government and fueling rumors of a brewing destabilization plot. Four other officers, also implicated in the rebellion, escaped early this month.

The Armed Forces was trying to track down Faeldon's other supporters in the military as he was arrested with a military prosecutor, Capt. Candelaria Rivas Friday night in Malabon.

Faeldon was with Rivas when Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines [ISAFP] operatives finally caught up with him 44 days after he escaped from military custody.

When asked if the military had identified Faeldon's supporters, Kison said: "Our counter-intelligence units are working hard on this. They have leads [and] in due time, we will be able to have positive results."

Rivas' letter

Kison later admitted that Faeldon had not revealed his military supporters during "debriefing."

Rivas, a military prosecutor who serves as spokesman for the Oakwood mutineers court-martial proceedings, reportedly declared in a letter that she supports Faeldon's "cause to fight... for a credible government."

"I believe and support the cause of Faeldon to a fight in a non-violent way for a credible government," said Rivas' handwritten letter which was reportedly recovered by ISAFP.

"[But] two things I cannot do," the letter continued. "[First] to mar the image of the AFP which I consider my own family, and [second] to speak against President Macapagal-Arroyo because God said: Touch not my anointed! That is, assuming that she really has the mandate of the people."

One swallow

The Palace was unperturbed by Rivas' decision to side with the cause of disgruntled junior military officers to bring the down the Arroyo administration.

"One swallow doesn't a summer make," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, quoting a proverb when asked about the likelihood of another coup.

Ermita said he did not know for sure if Rivas supported the cause of the Magdalo Group.

"If she was convinced by the group, that is her lookout," he told reporters.

"Let's not generalize. That's just one official... If that's her belief, we can't do anything."

Lovers?

According to military sources, Faeldon was captured because Rivas was being tailed by ISAFP operatives.

ISAFP reportedly suspected a relationship forming late last year, as the two frequently played badminton inside the ISAFP compound where Faeldon and other alleged Oakwood leaders, Navy Lt. s.g. Antonio Trillanes IV and James Layug and Marine Capt. Gary Alejano are detained.

Faeldon, 40, is again single as his 10-year marriage was annulled last year. He has a teenage son. Rivas, 34, is single.

While the AFP carefully avoided the mention of a romantic relationship, sources in the know said Faeldon and Rivas are lovers.

Under investigation

The Judge Advocate General's Office [JAGO], Rivas' unit, is already preparing charges to be filed against her before military and civilian courts.

"We're sticking to the line that Capt. Rivas will be charged before court-martial and [before a civilian court] as possible accessory to the continuing crime of coup d'etat. But as to the relationship, we can't speculate on that. Only the two of them know that," Kison said.

He added that Rivas was also being investigated to "determine whether she is involved in the destabilization" plots. "It's too early to tell if Capt. Rivas leaked information to Faeldon," said Kison.

Through his lawyer Roel Pulido, Faeldon denied that Rivas was his girlfriend and accused the military of playing up the romantic angle to discount the support he was getting from his colleagues. *With AFP*

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Salonga links dissipation of Marcos money to poll fraud

By Mike Suarez

FORMER SENATOR JOVITO R. Salonga said yesterday the dissipation of P35 billion in funds seized by the government from deposed dictator Ferdinand Marcos' Swiss bank deposits was part of the reason President Macapagal-Arroyo could not "tell the whole truth" about the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

SALONGA

In an "Open Letter" to the President, Salonga said he was dismayed by Budget Secretary Romulo Neri's admission at a Senate hearing last November that only P8 billion of the money remained, and that the biggest withdrawal and disbursement took place immediately prior to and after the May 2004 presidential election.

Opposition leaders in both the Senate and House of Representatives have said that part of the money had been released to a select group of congressmen under the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani program of the Department of Agriculture that figured in the P728-million fertilizer scam. The funds were intended for the purchase of fertilizer and other farm inputs but were allegedly diverted to support Ms Arroyo's campaign.

Salonga, who as first chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government was instrumental in convincing Swiss authorities to freeze the Marcoses' Swiss bank deposits, lamented that nothing was left of the Marcos money for land reform as mandated by law.

"I recall that last year, more than six months after the May 2004 election, a major paper published ... my advice 'Be not afraid to tell the truth'," Salonga said. "Now I realize why you could not tell the whole truth, partly because of the far-reaching implications of the sad truth, as confirmed by the admission of Secretary Romulo Neri."

To support his point, Salonga attached as "Annex B" a list of disbursements from the Marcos funds as of Sept. 15, 2005 submitted by the Development Budget Coordinating Council "which shows that the biggest withdrawal and disbursement of the forfeited Swiss deposits took place on April 26, 2004 and immediately after the May 2004 elections."

Salonga pointed out to Ms Arroyo that the information he was putting forward to her did not come from press reports or opposition allegations but from the government itself.

"We in Kilosbayan had obtained the Status Report on the Proceeds (forfeited Swiss deposits) submitted by the Development Budget Coordinating Council (DBCC) which, to our shock and dismay, reveals that other than the amount of P8 billion for human rights victims during the Marcos regime, there are no more funds available from the Marcos Swiss deposits for the poor, landless farmers under the law (CARP) enacted in 1988, when I was Senate President."

Salonga recalled telling Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo some months ago that a Swiss lawyer who assisted PCGG during his watch had uncovered the existence of between $1 billion and $2 billion more in secret Marcos deposits in Europe.

"I hope and pray that for the sake of our suffering people, the recovery of this huge amount – bigger than the $683 million already recovered – will not be jeopardized by the disappearance of the Marcos Swiss deposits," said Salonga.

Referring to the pastoral letter issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines which called for the continued pursuit of the truth in the Garci scandal, Salonga told the President; "No one can validly assert that the CBCP is against you personally. For truth, like justice, is non-partisan.

He concluded his letter saying, "We respect your high office but we respect truth and justice more."

Asked in an interview what he expected the President to do, Salonga replied, "Justice must take its normal course...I'm against violence or a coup. Let her defend herself in impeachment proceedings."

8 shot dead in Lanao Sur billiard parlor massacre

COTABATO CITY – AT LEAST eight people were killed while six others were wounded when five gunmen strafed a billiard hall in Balabagan, Lanao del Sur, on Saturday, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) police said Monday.

Senior Supt. Akmad Mamalinta, ARMM police chief, said the attack was apparently part of a *rido* (family feud) as a son of one of the assailants was killed in the same town last month.

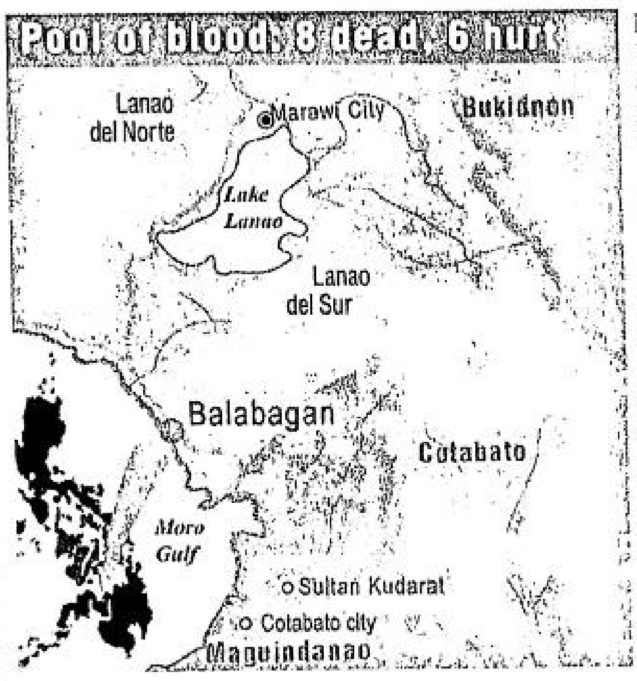
Mamalinta said the victims, mostly women and children, were watching a billiard game in Barangay Crossing Lalaguan at around 4 p.m. when the assailants drove past in a van and opened fire with assault rifles. Seven people were killed on the spot.

The wounded were rushed to the Cotabato Regional Medical Center here where one of them died while being treated.

Mamalinta said witnesses had identified one of the attackers and police were searching for him.

"The name of the suspect has been established but we will not divulge his identity so as not to hamper our manhunt. I ordered the chief of police in Balabagan to file the necessary charges against the perpetrator," he said.

The family of one of the assailants apparently had a lingering feud with another family whom the attacker suspected of being behind his son's death, Mamalinta said.



"They apparently spotted a lone quarry in the billiard hall then opened fire, killing many, including children and women who had nothing to do with their feud," Balabagan Mayor Amer Sampiano told The Associated Press by telephone. "It was a massacre."

Balabagan is a coastal town of about 30,000 farmers and fishermen.

Deadly family feuds, locally called "rido," are common in many parts of Mindanao.

Studies funded by the Asia Foundation and the US Agency for International Development showed that there have been more than 1,200 clan feuds on Mindanao since the 1930s, killing nearly 5,000 people and displacing tens of thousands.

About 60 percent of the feuds, which often last generations, remain unresolved, adding to the perception of lawlessness and violence in Mindanao, the studies said.

Abhoud Syed Linnga, an expert on Muslim affairs, said most of the feuds stemmed from political and business rivalries or land disputes, but could be over petty issues like a game of basketball.

On Saturday, 20 people were wounded when two gunmen on a motorcycle fired on a crowd leaving a mosque in Jolo, Sulu, in an incident that police said may be linked to a clan war. *Jeoffrey Maitem and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AP; Reuters*

De Castro to visit Kuwait

VICE PRESIDENT NOli de Castro will fly to Kuwait shortly to plead for the life of a Filipino maid who is set to hang for killing her boss there, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Marilou Ranario, a 33-year-old teacher who went to work as a domestic in Kuwait, was sentenced to die by hanging in September for the death of her employer. The woman had alleged her boss insulted her and her fellow Filipinos.

De Castro and other Filipino officials are waiting for their Kuwaiti visas and would "leave as soon as possible. They already have (plane) tickets," DFA spokesman Gilberto Asuque told reporters. *AFP*

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Bro. Andrew, ex-De La Salle prexy, dies; 65

By Alcuin Papa

FORMER EDUCATION SECRETARY BRO. ANDREW Gonzales FSC died Sunday of congestive heart failure brought on by advanced kidney disease at the De La Salle University (DLSU) Health Sciences campus in Dasmariñas, Cavite. He was 65.

His attending physician, Dr. Romeo Ariniego, announced Bro. Andrew's death at 5:40 p.m.

Gonzales was confined on Dec. 2 at the DLSU Health Sciences Hospital with a fever and pneumonia. He underwent dialysis after his kidneys failed and was placed in the hospital's intensive care unit on Jan. 26.

Gonzales was president of De La Salle University system in 1978-91 and 1994-98. He was president of Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp. in 1991-98. He was appointed secretary of the then Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) on July 1, 1998, serving up to Jan. 19, 2001.

Gonzales rejoined the Manila Bulletin as president on Sept. 27, 2001. He also became DLSU vice president for academics and research and presidential adviser for academics and research in 2003-05.

Department of Education officer in charge Fe Hidalgo in a statement said Gonzales' "dedicated service to the cause of Philippine education is unmatched."

"His contributions, from the development of the basic education curriculum to the restoration of our heritage schools, are recognized for their ingenuity and importance. The improvements we are seeing now are due in part to the vision and inspiration of Bro. Andrew. His was a life devoted to the service of the education sector. He shall forever serve as an inspiration to us all. He will be missed."

In its own statement, DLSU said that during Gonzales's term as system president, the university "underwent significant developments as an institution of higher learning, particularly in the areas of research, faculty and program development.

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CBCP plea for truth runs into brick wall

MEETING WITH WAR VETERANS
President Macapagal-Arroyo greets members of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines during a ceremony in Malacañang yesterday. LYN RILLON

From page A1

"Congress started the investigation and Congress itself closed it down," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

"They are making it appear that it was Malacañang who was running the investigation," he said. "If they think that we should continue [in order] to [learn] the truth, then let's continue."

Ermita blamed the opposition for botching its chances of probing deeper into the alleged wiretapping of phone conversations between Ms Arroyo and Virgilio Garcillano. The opposition said the recordings showed Ms Arroyo had manipulated the 2004 presidential election—a charge she has vehemently denied.

"In the case of former Commissioner Garcillano, they have been criticizing us for his absence. When he finally appeared to testify, they are now claiming that what he is saying are all untrue. I really don't know what they want," Ermita said.

GMA ready for court cases

"We are open to all just and fair means under the law to ferret out the truth surrounding all controversies affecting the presidency," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

"Those who believe they have strong evidence should file" a case before the country's antigraft court "and give all parties concerned a chance to explain their positions," he told a radio interview.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that there could be no closure to the Garcillano controversy unless all the audio tapes were authenticated and analyzed.

Aside from the wiretapping drama, Ms Arroyo faced charges that her family had received payoffs from "jueteng," an illegal numbers game, and that she had diverted P728 million in agricultural funds to her 2004 election campaign.

Truth has many faces

"There was really no closure on so many of these things. That could be a reasonable assessment," said Gonzalez. "The truth in all these cases have many faces."

"Just one specific example, where is the truth of the tapes—from the mother tape to the children's tape and to the grandchildren's?" he said.

The Senate, House of Representatives, and whoever has these tapes should submit them to experts to determine their authenticity, Gonzales added.

"Are they endorsing the second impeachment complaint?" said North Cotabato Rep. Emmylou Talino-Santos. "That can be properly addressed when the ban on impeachment proceedings lapses in July 2006."

She said that the truth of whether the President talked to Garcillano to rig the elections was not within the parameters of the House investigation.

Rep. Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur said all the leeway had been given to the opposition to pin down Garcillano during his three appearances before the House inquiry into the wiretaps.

"Is it our fault the opposition was so clueless in coming up with their questions that they failed to get the answers they wanted?" Pichay said.

Bungling, grandstanding

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero of Sorsogon said lawyers were consolidating the evidence in a new bid to throw the book at Garcillano.

"We are readying charges of violation of election laws, rigging of elections against former Commissioner Garcillano," Escudero said. But the leader of the opposition criticized for bungling the impeachment case against Ms Arroyo had yet to say what new evidence it had.

Rep. Teodoro Locsin of Makati City said the bishops reminded the opposition not to grandstand.

He said that during the seven-month wiretapping hearing in Congress the opposition came up with "silly, repetitive questions."

"Instead of trying to get the truth, they're trying to get the attention of the cameras."

A good sermon

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the CBCP statement was a "good sermon."

"It's a good moral guideline. But the actual fleshing out of the guidelines is our particular sphere of action," he said.

"We should continue the pressure on Gloria to make her resign," Pimentel said. "We need not put Gloria in jail."

Opposition Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson said the CBCP statement was a subtle indictment of Ms Arroyo, and proved the bishops were aware of her attempts to rig the 2004 presidential elections and fix her way out of impeachment last year.

Administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago twitted the CBCP for its apparent double standard.

She pointed out that there was also no closure on the "wider" electoral fraud against President Fidel Ramos in 1992 and that the impeachment trial against President Joseph Estrada in 2000 also "stopped at technicalities" because the prosecutors chose instead "to stage a coup d'etat at Edsa."

"It never works when the carcass of principle is exhumed for public consumption, depending on the discretion of the CBCP. The signs of the times mandate consistency in moral principles," she said.

Wannabe politicians

Santiago said she felt relieved that the CBCP rejected the idea of violence to resolve the crisis.

"What a relief! CBCP has finally admitted that social justice is best pursued under a rule of law, not a disco-type Edsa assembly attended by a few bishops who are wannabe politicians," she said. "Goodbye, Edsa coup d'etat."

Before nightfall yesterday, about a dozen senior CBCP members led by CBCP president Angel Lagdameo showed up at the Silent Majority Prayer Movement at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

A surprise appearance was made by Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal of Cebu, a known Arroyo supporter. He joined the crowd of about 1,000, including noisy traditional and leftist politicians.

Ignore CBCP at your peril

Bishop Teodoro Bacani warned the President against ignoring the CBCP statement.

"She ignores it at her peril," he told reporters. "If she doesn't listen, it'll be the people who'll move. She'll be in danger because the people will see that she's really not responding to the needs of the country." *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Armand N. Nocum, Christian V. Esguerra, Christine O. Avendaño and Luige A. del Puerto; and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Mine firms warn of job, capital risks

From page A1

and foremost affected," he said.

The mining sector directly employs one million workers and brings economic benefits to 10 million Filipinos, including the workers' dependents, according to Romualdez.

Breach of contract

He said revoking production sharing and similar agreements in the capital-intensive industry would amount to a breach of contract, and could lead to lasting damage to the country's reputation as a capital destination.

"We can't even begin to quantify the amount of money that the government would have to pay back to the investors," Romualdez said.

Some $300 million in investments were poured into the country last year because of the revived mining industry, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Exports

Philippine mining companies exported $4.6 billion worth of metal and nonmetal products last year, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

An environment official said recalling all approved mining concessions and disapproving pending applications would put the government at a huge legal risk.

"We enter into agreements, and we cannot just unilaterally cancel them. That would not be standing on strong legal ground," Deinrado Dimalibot, DENR undersecretary for mining, said.

Dimalibot said suspending or canceling contracts must have a legal basis.

"Otherwise, the government would be paying these investors the money they put in for explorations, operations," he said. "We cannot risk that because the government cannot pay."

Dimalibot, also undersecretary for legal affairs, said the bishops should discuss its call for the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995 with Congress as the DENR was only an implementing agency.

Madrigal bill

Taking her cue from the CBCP, opposition Sen. Jamby Madrigal yesterday filed a bill repealing the Mining Act of 1995, saying it was about time the "wholesale exploitation" of the country's resources was stopped.

Administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago disagreed, saying the law should only be amended, not repealed.

"Our country's environment remains in a most dangerous condition due to the present administration policy of opening up our country's last remaining natural resources to wholesale exploitation by transnational mining corporations. This must be stopped now," Madrigal said.

"We can no longer remain apathetic as our national patrimony continues to be plundered for the benefit of the few, while our indigenous brothers and sisters are robbed of their ancestral domains as our air, water and soil are poisoned," she said.

Madrigal said she felt relieved that the CBCP had called for the repeal of the Mining Act and declared it "antilife." She recalled writing CBCP president Archbishop Angel Lagdameo and urging its members "to fight for the environment."

"The Church has responded to our call; it is now up to all Filipinos to join the fight for life," she said.

Out of the loop

Santiago, however, said that the law should only be amended by establishing a police and "prosecutorial system" for the environment.

"In defending the outmoded nationalist provisions of our Constitution, the bishops are out of the loop in global economics. Under the CBCP world-view, the likely scenario will merely install Filipino exploiters over foreign exploiters," she said.

"To compete in the global economy, the country should open up the development of natural resources to foreign capital," Santiago said.

"However, this should be done in stages, by which foreign equity rises gradually after a certain period of time. Thereafter, foreign equity should then be scaled down back to nationalist levels."

Rehash

Malacañang said the Catholic Church's appeal to have the Mining Act repealed was a rehash of its position against the entry of big foreign mining companies in the country.

"The Church, especially the bishops whose jurisdiction covers *lumad* (indigenous peoples), is really against the Mining Act because the bishops say that this is destructive to the livelihood of indigenous peoples," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said.

Ermita assured the CBCP that the government had taken into consideration both the social and environmental impact of mining projects before issuing licenses to foreign and local mining firms.

"As long as there are rules and regulations and these are strictly implemented, I don't think mining will be that bad because it really helps our economy and we can take better care of our cultural communities," he said.

He said this was the reason the government established the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples.

Last year, Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, former CBCP president, wrote the DENR to raise the bishops' concern about the lack of transparency in the approval of mining contracts and displacement of indigenous peoples.

Dialogue

Romualdez said the bishops' statement had triggered inquiries by worried members of the local mining chamber, many of them involved in about two dozen major mining projects that took off last year after the Supreme Court upheld the legality of the mining law.

He urged the bishops to accept the chamber's longstanding call for a face-to-face dialogue on the issues raised by the Church.

"We would want to pursue a dialogue with the bishops and maybe they could reach discernment on Philippine mining issues," he said.

Since 1998, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines has opened channels for a possible dialogue but has not been successful in reaching out to members of the CBCP, according to Romualdez.

Market analysts said the CBCP statement did not affect mining stocks yesterday. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Opposition's idea of truth different, says Garcillano

From page A1

position is banking on bugged conversations," said former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in a phone interview yesterday.

The confessional may be the only way to find the truth, said Rep. Prospero Pichay, an administration ally. The Surigao del Sur congressman said the bishops could ask Ms Arroyo to confess to one of the prelates.

But, Pichay quipped: "What truth are they looking for?"

I can't invent stories

Garcillano denied any "acts of evasion and obstruction," at least on his part, during the seven-month wiretapping inquiry which ended Wednesday.

"In fact, I told them the truth, but they won't listen to me. I can't invent stories. The problem is that they have a concept of truth different from what I've said," Garcillano said.

The 68-year-old Garcillano stressed that the most celebrated inquiry in the history of the House of Representatives failed because the opposition's hands were soiled as well.

"Every time I look at them, I see blood in their hands," he said. He did not elaborate.

Garcillano claimed that the tapped phone conversations between him and Ms Arroyo at the height of the canvassing of votes in 2004 did not "show any agreement to rig the elections."

However, he agreed with the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines that the truth should be relentlessly pursued.

"There is an imperative need for leaders of this country to raise the sagging spirit of the Filipino people. They should not hide the truth from their constituents. They must exercise their conscience and not invent stories," said Garcillano, who came out after five months of hiding in December last year.

Ask GMA to confess

Pichay told the INQUIRER that the House inquiry on the wiretapping case was not a fact-finding investigation but a hearing in aid of legislation—to plug loopholes in the Omnibus Election Code and the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

"Why don't they just ask the President to confess before one of them [bishops] and ask what she said in order for them to know the truth?" said Pichay.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles of Davao City said he also supported the CBCP stand.

"The entire nation wants to know the truth. That is a given. But the search for truth has to be within legal parameters. There are many truths in courts of law that cannot be out due to technical legal processes and problems like admissible evidence," Nograles said.

"This is something we need to live with in the search for the truth," he said.

GARCILLANO

PICHAY

Sandiganbayan allows Erap to see eye doctor

By Nelson F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN SPECIAL DIVISION yesterday allowed former President Joseph Estrada to get treatment for an infected eye at the San Juan Medical Center.

Estrada's right eye is infected and has affected his vision.

In a seven-page Omnibus Manifestation and Motion, Estrada's lawyer, former Sen. Rene Saguisag, asked the anti-graft court's Special Division to allow the former president to be seen by an ophthalmologist, based on the recommendation of Dr. Lorenzo Jocson, Estrada's personal physician.

In open court, Jocson said that he visited Estrada last Jan. 21 and Jan. 25 at the detention center in Tanay, Rizal, and noticed "swelling and puffiness of the right eye."

Estrada had complained of "blurring vision and bi-temporal headaches," he said.

Jocson, a surgeon, said he initially thought Estrada's eye condition was caused by an insect bite and prescribed pain killers and antihistamines.

Although the puffiness around Estrada's right eye subsided, his eyelid was drooping, "virtually, *hindi na makakita yung isang mata* (one eye cannot see)," Jocson said, adding that the condition should be looked at by an ophthalmologist.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio did not oppose Estrada's request for a medical examination, but stressed the need for him to be transferred to the Veteran's Memorial Medical Center for the duration of his plunder trial.

This proposal was opposed by Estrada's defense lawyers for fear the facility could be bugged.

Villa-Ignacio said that it had been at least nine days since Estrada initially complained about his eye. If the former president had been detained at the VMMC, he would have received medical care right away, he said.

Former Manila City Prosecutor Jose Flaminiano, who is also a member of Estrada's legal defense team, said VMMC would have a "chilling effect" on Estrada and potential witnesses of the defense panel.

Flaminiano said the government had no respect for a person's right to privacy, as shown in recent developments. He added that the intelligence service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines has been known to misuse its bugging capabilities.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice and Special Division chair Teresita de Castro directed the court sheriff, Ed Urieta, to escort Estrada to the hospital. She also ordered the Philippine National Police to provide the usual security arrangement.

It's up to Estrada's doctors to determine how long he would stay in the hospital.

Saguisag asked the Special Division to reconsider its resolution directing Estrada to choose between Tanay and VMCC, proposing instead that the former president be allowed to moved to his Polk Street residence in Greenhills, San Juan.

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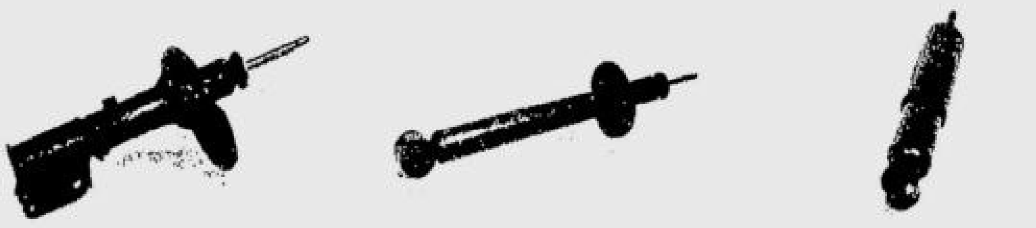

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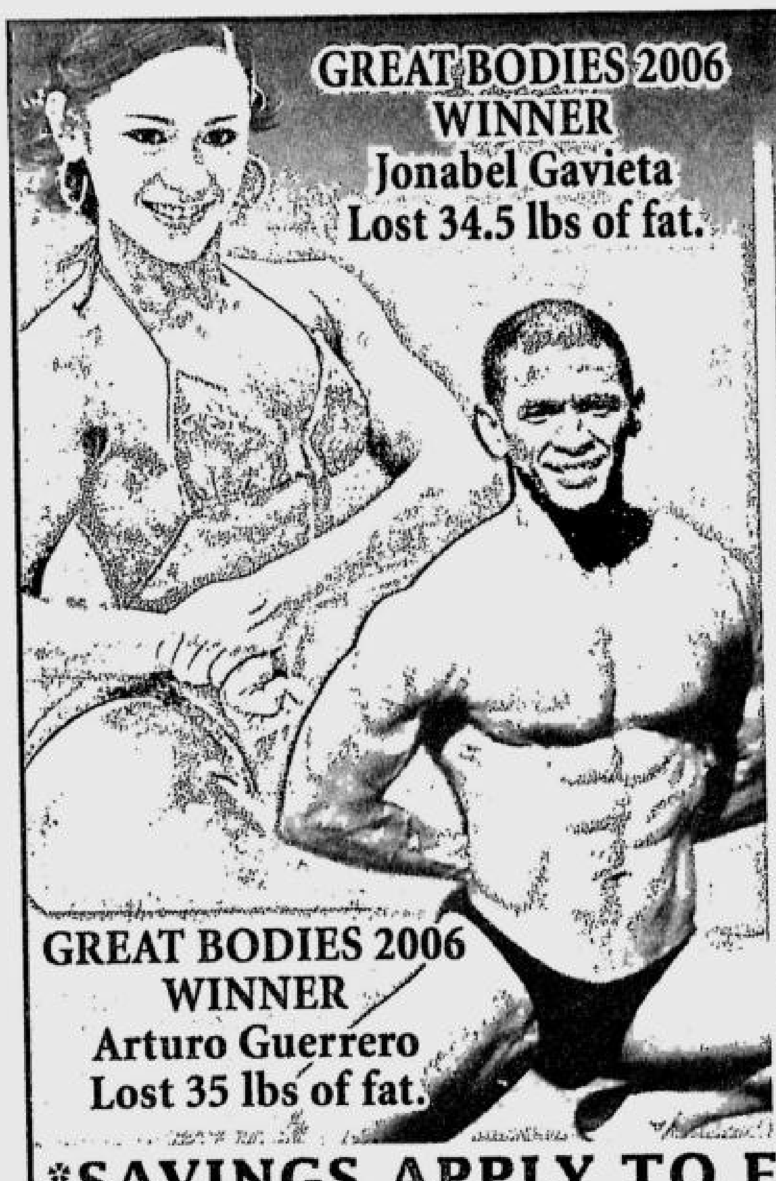

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RP growth slower but surprising

From page A1

percent in 2004. Santos said all sub-sectors in industry posted "remarkable growth," except for utilities, which suffered because of reductions in government spending to achieve its fiscal deficit target.

"The economy regained the growth momentum that got derailed during the third quarter," said NSDB Secretary General Romulo Virola. "All major sectors contributed positively to the growth of the economy despite the persistent increases in oil and consumer prices and the political turmoil that continued to hound business and government."

Achievement

Although GDP expansion missed the high end of the government target of 5.3 percent, President Macapagal-Arroyo said that last year's growth was an "achievement," considering the higher oil prices, weaker global demand for Philippine products and political squabbling.

Ms Arroyo said money sent home by a bigger number of OFWs, many of whom had landed higher paying jobs abroad, provided a strong pillar for the economy.

Remittances were estimated to rise 23 percent to $10.85 billion in 2005 compared to $8.81 billion the previous year. More than eight million Filipinos work abroad, representing about a 10th of the country's population.

"Even critics of the economy say we are resilient. We are more than resilient, we are tough," said Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning of the National Economic and Development Authority.

David Cohen, director for economic forecasting at Action Economics in Singapore, admitted he and other private sector analysts had harbored doubts the Philippines would post a growth higher than 5 percent.

Q4 growth

"So now I hope people will be satisfied," Cohen said. "It does echo the strong year-end performance we had seen across the region."

The Philippine economy registered a seasonally adjusted growth of 2.7 percent in the fourth quarter, way below market estimates of 3.2 percent. Even so, it was still the strongest quarterly figure in eight years.

"Despite the upsurge in remittances of the country's OFWs, the continued hike in the prices of goods and services set back consumer spending in the fourth quarter," Virola said.

Although the higher prices of oil and basic commodities crimped consumer spending, consumption grew at a seasonally adjusted pace of 8 percent in the fourth quarter from the third where it rose by only 1 percent.

Consumption makes up about 70 percent of Philippine GDP, and the fourth quarter is traditionally a period of brisk spending as people prepare for the Christmas holidays.

Shipments of electronic products, which make up two-thirds of total exports, have suffered from competition with China, especially after Japan's Toshiba Corp. moved a laptop manufacturing plant from the Philippines to China in late 2004.

For the first 11 months of 2005, exports grew by just 2.7 percent from a year earlier. The government had an export growth target of 10 percent for 2005, but the central bank had said exports might only rise by 6.0 percent. Exports grew by 14.1 percent in 2004.

Gov't forecast

The government expects GDP growth to pick up this year to 5.7 to 6.3 percent. While that December forecast is below the government's original goal of 6.3 to 7.3 percent, it is well above the median forecast of 4.7 percent taken from a Reuters poll of analysts.

Analysts see slower consumer spending as a key risk to growth this year, as Filipinos cope with an expected rise in the value-added tax rate next month to 12 percent from 10 percent.

The expanded VAT is a key part of the fiscal reforms aimed at raising chronically weak revenues and ensuring a balanced budget by 2008 at the earliest.

"For 2006, the global picture remains supportive and there is reason to hope that the Philippines can participate, especially with continued strength in remittances," Cohen said. "However, rising oil prices can again potentially derail everything."

The continuing political crisis hounding the Arroyo administration would remain the major challenge to the economy this year, according to analysts.

Ms Arroyo survived an impeachment bid in Congress last year, but her popularity remains in the doldrums over allegations she cheated in the 2004 polls. Allies have deserted her and calls for her resignation continue.

Increased spending

Even so, Santos said a recovery in agricultural production and increased infrastructure spending should also help the economy achieve the government's GDP growth target this year.

"The challenge now is to sustain and accelerate growth to a level where we can significantly raise the standard of living of majority of Filipinos," Santos said.

Dennis Arroyo, who is not related to the President, said a boom in the mining industry and huge revenues from the higher consumer tax could generate up to P77.5 billion in extra revenue this year.

Since the Supreme Court in December 2004 threw out a legal challenge to the law that liberalized the mining sector, 24 mining projects have generated $339.7 million in investments, creating some 5,000 jobs.

Santos said that while the fiscal position remained weak, it was continually improving.

The budget deficit is expected to fall to P124.9 billion, or 2.21 percent of GDP this year, from P146.5 billion in 2005, he said.

But Solita Monsod, an economics professor at the University of the Philippines, voiced concern over the way the Arroyo administration was dealing with the huge budget deficit. She said the government should be careful about cutting down on expenditures and instead raise more revenues.

Monsod said cutting government expenditures would adversely affect economic growth. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr., AP, AFP and Reuters.*

GMA presents ₱1B in benefits to cops

From page A1

she had asked Pag-Ibig to "rev up its shelter generation program for policemen."

Ms Arroyo said she had also talked to Carlito Puno, chair of the Commission on Higher Education, to open 1,000 new scholarship slots to children of police personnel "who have fallen and who have been wounded in action."

(Earlier, officials unveiled the PNP Heritage Park, at the center of which is a monument with marble walls bearing the names of policemen who died in the line of duty.)

On top of these, she called on Congress to pass the budgetary allocation for compensation so that 120,000 members of the PNP and other civil servants could receive an average 8-percent increase in their take-home pay.

Bona fide poor

She acknowledged that many PNP personnel were "bona fide members of the poor."

"Before our fiscal reforms, we were expecting so much of our policemen without giving much to our police. But, to those from whom much is expected, much must also be given," she said.

Ms Arroyo said that in the next few days the government would release a series of Saros (Special Allotment Release Order) worth P1 billion for the PNP so it could hire more police personnel and buy more handguns and patrol cars.

For the next five years, the government will hire 15,000 police personnel and purchase 25,000 handguns and 2,500 new patrol cars for them, according to the President.

She said 15 percent of the slots for new recruits would be reserved for women.

Phone lines, too

To help fight crime better, the President said she had ordered 50 more telephone lines to be opened for the PNP emergency response network.

Ms Arroyo also extolled the police for their commitment to protect and defend the country against the pirates who "prefer to pillage our gains."

"There are dark places where the sunlight of freedom and hope does not shine, and there are dark and evil people who reside in the shadows who wish to do our nation and our people harm," she said.

The President said the police knew who these people were—kidnappers, criminals, terrorists, drug dealers and destabilizers "who are working to plant fear in the people every day."

She called the police "heroes" deserving of the faith, respect and the applause of the people.

Ensure loyalty

Police officials did not see Ms Arroyo's promises to the PNP as an attempt to buy off and ensure their loyalty to her scandal-ridden administration.

"These are long-delayed requirements," said Chief Supt. Victor Boco, head of the Bicol police, referring to the handguns and patrol cars.

"She does not have to do that. We've always been behind her administration," Boco said when asked if he thought Ms Arroyo's promises would help cement the police's loyalty to her.

Senior government officials have probably found the time to really listen to the problems of the police force, according to Boco.

"We know what we lack, and I can speak for my region. Here, we really have problems with mobility," said Chief Supt. Ely de la Paz, head of the Eastern Visayas police. "If those are given, that will really help us a lot."

Other high-ranking officers echoed similar observations.

"We're not being bought with these promises," said Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, head of the Police Community Relations Group.

"Where do we get these things, anyway? Of course, they'd come from the government," he said.

In his speech, PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao said that for the police to deliver effective services to the public, the police would need 50,000 more men, 20,000 more handguns and 734 more police stations.

Of the 1,500 or so police stations nationwide, one third or roughly 500 need patrol cars, he said.

Also, 180 troop carriers are needed to quickly move police personnel to the regions, he said.

Reacting to Ms Arroyo's speech, Lomibao said more resources meant "better performance is expected from the PNP."

He dismissed those who saw the benefits as Ms Arroyo's way of buying police support as people who were just "sowing intrigues."

Abalos, other Comelec execs reject quit call anew

From page A1

Mehol Sadain and Rufino Javier would not resign because doing so would give the impression that they were guilty of wrongdoing.

The Comelec has an ugly public reputation. Results of a Social Weather Stations survey conducted at the height of the wiretapping issue in July last year gave the poll body a negative 27 trust rating.

Two of the current commissioners—Javier and Sadain—will finish their terms on Thursday, giving Ms Arroyo a chance to fill the vacancies as well as a third seat that has been vacant since June last year.

Romeo Brawner, who assumed his post in September last year, is the only commissioner whose name has not been dragged into the scandals.

Trial court

Abalos deplored the accusations against the Comelec, saying these were never brought before any trial court.

"That's the trouble when there's no full-blown trial," Abalos said.

He said the Supreme Court's nullification, due to bidding irregularities, of the purchase of the automated machines from MegaPacific eSolutions Inc. was reached "without an extensive inquiry into the facts."

He pointed out that unlike in the case of the expanded value-added tax law, the high tribunal never issued any temporary restraining order or held any subsequent hearing for the automation contract.

Unlike in the NorthRail deal, the case over the automatic machines was not remanded to a lower court, he said.

Garci acted alone

"The case is pending; we'll wait for its [resolution]," Abalos said, referring to the graft case being investigated by the Ombudsman.

With regard to the wiretap scandal, Abalos said former Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano acted alone. The wiretapping controversy involved supposed conversations between Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo to tamper with the 2004 vote.

Abalos said Comelec officials were willing to undergo a judicial or congressional investigation into the controversy anytime.

James Arthur Jimenez, a director at Comelec's education and information department, said Abalos and the other commissioners would not resign as a matter of principle.

An independent body

"Comelec is an independent body and its members are only removable by impeachment," he told reporters.

Jimenez said that just because Abalos and the others rejected calls for them to resign did not mean the Comelec would not do anything about other points raised by the bishops, such as the need for a modern election process. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Armand N. Nocum and Leila B. Salaverria*

Automated 2007 elections look dim

By TJ Burgonio

WITH LESS THAN TWO YEARS to go, IT experts are not that optimistic that the country's election system could be fully automated in time for the 2007 midterm elections.

Gus Lagman, adviser of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, admitted yesterday that the timetable for such an automated system would be too "tight."

"We're only 17 months away. It would take three months before that (modernization) law could be passed. So we're left with 14 months. And then the bidding process normally takes several months, maybe 90 days," Lagman told a Senate hearing on the electoral system.

"That's going to leave us 11 months to procure and implement the system, and educate the voters," he added.

Educating the electorate on the new system would also take several months, he stressed.

Elena Van Tooren, president of the Philippine Computer Society, said it would take at least two years to implement an automated system.

She cautioned against rushing into a system that was being tried only for the first time.

She also said that, owing to many questions about the credibility and integrity of the whole process, "it may take a while to build this credibility and transparency in the process."

Lagman, Tooren and other IT experts appeared at the hearing on three Senate bills seeking to amend RA 8436, which authorized the Commission on Elections to use automated counting machines in the May 1998 elections.

The hearing was conducted by the committee on constitutional amendments, chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon.

Lagman said an automated system could be in place before 2007 if RA 8436 was quickly amended or if a special bidding process was held.

"It's doable, but we have to move very fast. The law must be amended as quickly as possible, there should be a special bidding process so we can speed this up," he said later in an interview.

Joker sees something sinister in PCGG silence

From page A1

tle the cases against Marcos crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

Sabio not only refused to reply to Arroyo's questions about an alleged government plan for a compromise deal with Cojuangco, but also ordered his fellow commissioners and PCGG staff not to answer.

After Sabio refused to budge and on the motion of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the Senate finance committee slashed to zero the proposed P67 million budget of the PCGG for 2006.

"What is so secretive about the deal that Chairman Sabio would risk losing his budget all because he did not want to answer a very simple question? There's something sinister in this," Arroyo said in a press conference.

Interviewed by reporters, Sabio said he wanted to protect his office but refused to elaborate on how the PCGG could be hurt if he answered Arroyo's question.

When asked if his answer would have been "incriminating," Sabio said: "Not for us. I'm a new official of the PCGG."

Arroyo said he had received information that negotiations on a compromise agreement on the P130-billion coconut levy fund had been going on for the last two weeks.

"You would think that what (Sabio) knows has the value of a confession. Why can't he just answer the question? The answer will not prejudice him. What worries me is that he could not answer the question of whether the President knew or not," Arroyo said.

First time

"The implication is that the President knew but (Sabio) did not want to answer. That is more worrisome. I never expected that this hearing would go this way. This is the first time that a hearing has resulted in this kind of an answer, with a resource person like the PCGG chairman defying the Senate," he added.

On Dec. 19 last year, Sabio said the PCGG was open to a compromise with Cojuangco but the business tycoon ruled out any agreement two days later.

"Which makes it worse. Why is Sabio now so eager (if Cojuangco had said no)?" Arroyo said.

Sabio's side

Sabio defended his refusal to answer questions at the Senate, saying that PCGG charter stipulated that "no member or staff of the commission shall be required to testify or produce evidence in any judicial, legislative, or administrative proceeding concerning matters within its official cognizance."

Sabio added that the Supreme Court itself had upheld the PCGG charter.

"With due respect and deep regret, I am constrained to say that I have decided not to testify or produce evidence in this proceeding concerning matters within the official cognizance of the commission. And I have advised my fellow members and our staff to do likewise," Sabio said in a prepared statement he read to the committee.

He read the statement midway during the budget hearing, which lasted for only 15 minutes after Arroyo insisted that the PCGG chair answer his questions.

Presidential approval

Arroyo pointed out that Sabio on his own could not have approved negotiations for a deal that involved billions of pesos since this would require a "policy decision" from the President.

"I was executive secretary when (former PCGG) Chair (Jovito) Salonga entered into compromise agreements and could not do so without the authority of the President of the Philippines," Arroyo said.

"Certainly, the PCGG does not have the authority under its charter which I made, as Executive Secretary during the time of Cory Aquino, to enter into agreement unless the President of the Philippines says so," he said.

"Now, what I want to ask this: Did President GMA authorize you to enter into an agreement?" he said.

"Did President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo authorize you, we want to know that?" Arroyo pressed on.

'Can't fool me'

"If your honor may please, as we said, we go by the decision of the honorable Supreme Court," Sabio replied.

But Arroyo said Sabio could not refuse to answer his questions since the PCGG chair was attending a budget hearing, and not a congressional investigation.

"He thinks he is immune to questions. I should know (the PCGG charter) since my name is there. That's the first executive order of President Cory Aquino and my signature is there. That's why he can't foo around with me in that matter," Arroyo said.

"There are so many government officials who think that they are sacred cows and untouchable," he added.

No walkout

Sabio denied earlier reports h had walked out of the Senat hearing, saying he had asked th senators if they were done wit him and that he asked to leave.

"And I left. I didn't walk out, Sabio told the INQUIRER in a phon interview.

When asked how he felt abou the Senate slashing his budget t nothing, Sabio said: "I leave tha to the wisdom of the Senate

With a report from Alcuin Pap

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Hamas victory may provoke EU aid cut

BRUSSELS—THE EUROPEAN UNION WILL SEEK Monday to hammer out a response to Hamas's shock election win, amid a blunt warning the bloc could cut huge aid payouts if the new Palestinian leadership threatens Israel.

As EU foreign ministers meet for regular talks, contacts were also expected with a senior Iranian negotiator on the deepening crisis over Tehran's nuclear plans, ahead of crunch talks in Vienna this week.

The Brussels meeting will be the first chance for the 25-nation bloc's ministers to talk since the long-ruling Fatah faction lost last week's Palestinian elections at the hands of the militant Islamic group.

The EU is unlikely to take any rash decisions: Diplomats stress it has time while waiting for a Palestinian government to be formed, and in the meantime Palestinian Authority head Mahmud Abbas remains its key contact.

But German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned starkly at the weekend it would be "unthinkable" for the EU to continue to fund the Authority if Hamas—which is on an EU terror blacklist—does not renounce violence against Israel.

"We must wait to see how Hamas acts and if it doesn't change its positions, it would be unthinkable that such an authority be directly supported by EU funds," said Merkel, whose country is the key EU paymaster.

The EU is the largest financial donor to the Palestinians and also one of the four sponsors of the stalled Mideast peace roadmap. Since 2003 it has given about 500 million euros ($613 million) annually.

The United States has already warned of cuts in aid if Hamas does not dissolve its armed wing and renounce threats against Israel, and Israel is pressing the EU to do the same.

"It is up to the EU to ... clarify that there will not be any European understanding shown towards a process which would mean the establishment of a government of terror," Israel's Foreign Minister Tzippi Livni said last week.

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana—who will also attend a meeting of the Mideast Quartet in London Monday evening, with counterparts from the US, Russia and the UN—has stressed that the EU faces a new situation.

"Everybody hopes that the obligation to act, to work within a political process will have a positive effect on Hamas," told the French daily Le Monde's weekend edition.

Also Monday the EU ministers will discuss the Iran crisis, which is coming to a head in the run-up to a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Thursday.

AFP

Saudi company boycotts Danish goods to protest paper's cartoons

ABDULLAH AL-OTHAIM, EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT of Al-Othaim Holding Company, reaffirmed yesterday his company's boycott of Danish products until that country's largest daily apologizes for publishing 12 cartoons which he said mocked the Prophet Muhammad, according to a news release sent to the INQUIRER by the Saudi Arabia Embassy in Manila.

The release quoted Al-Othaim as having said that just as Denmark had freedom of the press, Muslims had freedom to buy or not to buy. The company is comprised of five subsidiaries (Al-Othaim Supermarket, Al-Othaim Mall, Entertainment, Training Center and Al-Othaim Commercial Group) and owns around 60 branches across the Kingdom.

Al-Othaim's decision, which he said included a boycott of any supplier that includes Danish products, may help to impact SR1.3 billion worth of exports to Saudi Arabia.

Denmark has been the target of protests, particularly in the Middle East since the publication of the cartoons in the private-run Jyllands-Posten newspaper last September.

The 12 published cartoons included a portrayal of the prophet wearing a time-bomb shaped turban and showing him as a wild-eyed, knife-wielding bedouin flanked by two women shrouded in black.

Muslims consider images of Mohammed as blasphemous.

The cartoons have sparked an uproar in the Muslim world. Aside from Saudi Arabia, there have been campaigns for Danish products to be boycotted in Kuwait.

On Sunday, Libya said it was closing its embassy in Denmark in protest against the publication there last year of caricatures of the prophet Mohammed, amid a rising tide of anger in Muslim countries.

"In light of the attacks against the prophet Mohammed and the silence of the Danish authorities, Libya has decided to close down its diplomatic representation in Copenhagen," the Libyan foreign ministry announced in a statement run by the official Jana news agency.

The statement added that Libya would take "retaliatory economic measures against Denmark."

The Danish government "vigorously condemns these attacks as well as the fact that Danish flags have been burnt in the Arab world (on the West Bank) and expects the governments of these countries to do the same," Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller said in a statement.

Moeller said such acts were "worrying" as Denmark "normally maintains a good dialogue with the Arab world and has played a constructive role at the international level in the Middle East peace process and the promotion of dialogue and understanding."

He said he would be talking to fellow European Union foreign ministers in Brussels and the Danish government would decide in the light of its talks what further contacts it should make to resolve the issue.

The boycott has extended to companies such as Novo Nordisk (pharmaceuticals) and Grundfos (pumps) according to the Danish industries' federation.

Also adversely affected is Arla Foods, Europe's second-largest dairy company and the leading Danish exporter to Saudi Arabia, where it sells an estimated two billion kroner ($328 million) worth of products every year.

"More and more supermarkets are taking our products off their shelves and don't want fresh supplies because consumers no longer want to buy our brand," Arla Foods spokesperson Louis Honore said. "The situation is very serious."

Arla Foods sales staff had been summoned by major Saudi customers who were threatening to stop buying Arla butter and cheeses unless the Danish government officially apologized for the cartoons, he said.

Officials in Muslim countries and various religious bodies have voiced their indignation over the cartoons.

With a report from AFP

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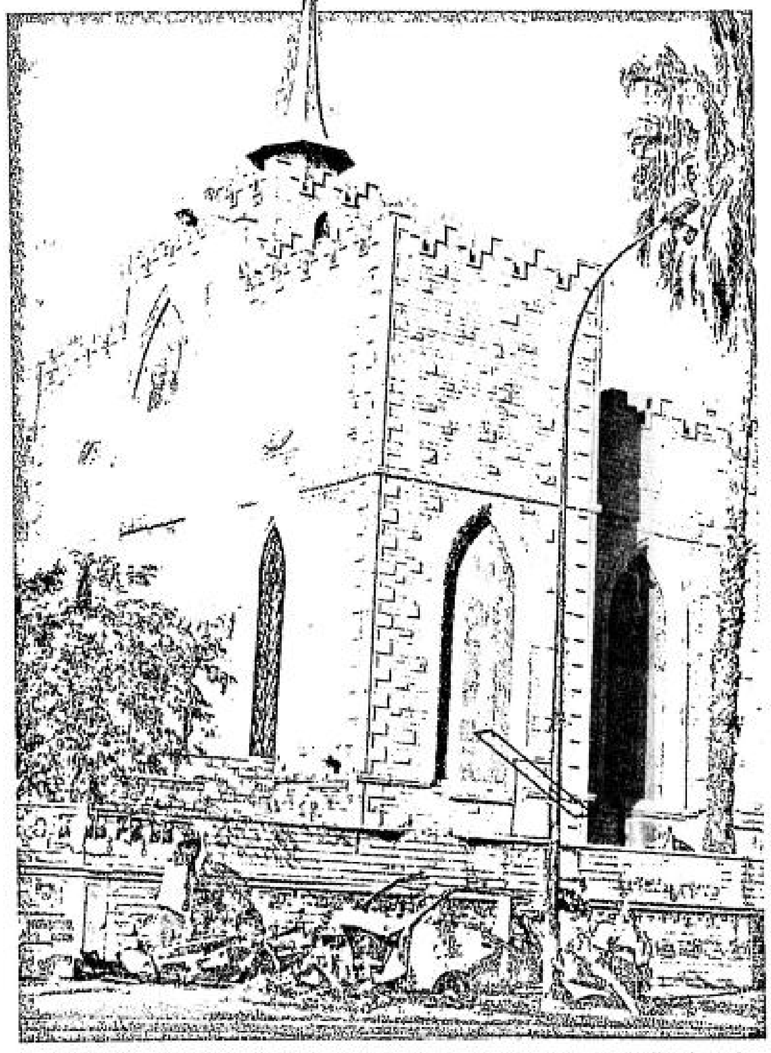


THE WRECKAGE of a car is strewn in front of a Roman Catholic church attacked by a car bomb the previous day in Baghdad Jan. 30. AFP

Bomb attacks in Iraq kill dozens; US reporters hurt

BAGHDAD—A SUICIDE CAR bomber blew himself up Monday next to a police training center in southeast Iraq, causing dozens of casualties, a day after a rocky session in the trial of Saddam Hussein.

One policeman was killed and 39 others wounded, including four senior officers, in the city of Nasiriyah when the bomber struck during a training session, police said.

"It was an open area where the policemen were training when a suicide car bomber blew up a car," said a police officer from Nasiriyah, 375 km from Baghdad.

Iraqi security forces have been prime targets of insurgents attempting to destabilize the country since the March 2003 US-led invasion.

A wave of fresh violence has been unleashed by insurgents in the past two days with dozens killed and scores of others wounded, as rebels have struck with car bombs near churches and roadside bombs across the country.

One roadside blast wounded two US television journalists near the town of Taji, north of Baghdad, on Sunday.

Sunday's attacks near churches in Baghdad and in the northern city of Kirkuk killed three people and wounded more than a dozen Iraqis. The attacks triggered fears of sectarian tension.

The UN representative in Iraq, Ashraf Qazi, said the bombings outside the churches were "a reprehensible act that can only exacerbate sectarian violence."

He called upon Iraqi authorities to preserve the safety of all worshippers and the sanctity of places of worship.

In central Iraq, Bob Woodruff, news anchor with the US television network ABC, and his cameraman Doug Vogt were seriously wounded when the vehicle they were in hit a roadside bomb.

The two were embedded with the US army, but riding in an Iraqi security forces armored vehicle ahead of an eight-vehicle convoy at the time of the attack, ABC reported.

They were flown Monday to a US military medical facility in Landstuhl, Germany, after undergoing surgery in Iraq, ABC News president David Westin said.

The latest rebel attacks came amid chaos in the trial of Saddam on Sunday, with the deposed dictator walking out and his half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti being ejected from the court on the judge's order.

The new Kurdish judge Rauf Rasheed Abdel Rahman left his authoritarian mark on his first day by ejecting Barzan from the court and also taking on Saddam in a heated verbal exchange.

"I want to leave the court," Saddam, red-faced with anger, told the judge during their argument, to which the judge replied that he could leave the court and then ordered the former dictator out.

"I led you for 35 years and you order me out of the court," retorted Saddam.

"I am the judge, you are the defendant. You have to obey the rules," said the judge.

Saddam said "this is an American court, not an Iraqi court."

The defense lawyers also walked out and have now threatened to boycott the trial completely.

"We are not going to appear in the next session for a number of reasons, the first is that the court was so aggressive against our clients and the lawyers," Najib al-Nuami, one of Saddam's lawyers and a former Qatari minister of justice, said. *AFP*

Sabotage suspected in Pakistan train plunge

DOMELI, PAKISTAN—SABOTEURS probably tampered with a section of railway track in Pakistan, causing a train to plunge into a ravine and killing at least three people, a minister said Monday.

Investigators found nuts on the track were unscrewed when they examined the site of Sunday's crash near the city of Jhelum in the eastern province of Punjab, Railways Minister Ishaq Khakwani told AFP.

Six carriages of the express jumped the rails and three fell into the 15-meter gully as it was travelling from Rawalpindi, a city adjoining Islamabad, toward the eastern city of Lahore.

"It is almost confirmed now that it is an act of sabotage. The evidence says it is sabotage," Khakwani said.

"We have seen spanners, the nuts of the fish plates were open," he added, referring to a key track part used to join different rail sections.

The minister said there were "several elements" who could have been involved with tampering with the rails, adding: "It could be internal, it could be external."

The suspected sabotage was also in a "technically important" area. "Such a derailment in a hilly area could have caused greater loss but luckily there were not many casualties," he added.

The rest of the estimated 400 passengers in the stricken coaches survived the crash and it was a "miracle" that more were not killed, said Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan, President Pervez Musharraf's spokesperson.

Two of the dead were women, he said.

Tariq Masood, a rescue worker from a private relief organization who rushed to the scene, said there were suspicions that the rails had been tampered with.

"People say the track was damaged, its fish plates were removed. There are fears it could be an act of sabotage," he told AFP at the crash site early Monday.

The railways minister said repair work was under way and rail traffic was likely to resume Monday afternoon.

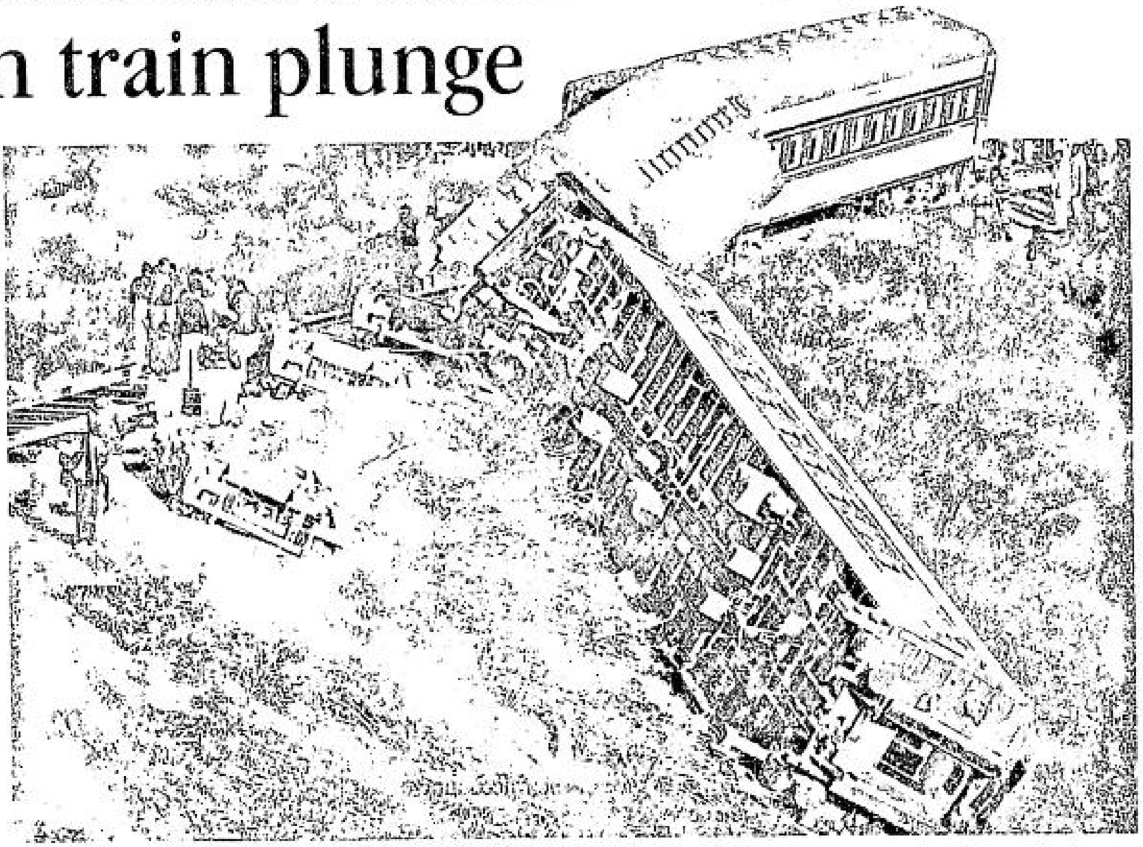
Officials would not speculate in detail about who might have sabotaged the track.

Tribal militants from Pakistan's southwestern province of Baluchistan have carried out a series of bombings on railway lines since January 2004, although the attacks have largely been confined to Baluchistan itself.

Seven people were injured in a bomb blast on a passenger train near the provincial capital Quetta last April.

The rebels are demanding more revenues from Baluchistan's natural resources and increased political rights.

Accidents on Pakistan's aging and overcrowded railway system have themselves claimed hundreds of lives in recent years. *AFP*



PAKISTAN Army troops and railway workers gather around a derailed passenger train in Domeli, about 100 km southeast of Islamabad Jan. 30. Sabotage to a rail track caused part of the packed express train to derail and crash into a ravine, killing at least three people and injuring more than 40, officials said. AP

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Bird flu virus reaches Cyprus

BRUSSELS/NICOSIA—EUROPEAN UNION authorities have confirmed the presence of the deadly H5N1 strain of avian flu in a sample taken from poultry from northern Cyprus, the European Commission said on Sunday.

It was the latest sign that the virus, found mostly in Asia, was spreading west to infect birds in Europe and humans on the continent's doorstep. Turkey has reported 21 human cases of H5N1, including four deaths.

"The European Commission and the Turkish authorities have been informed ... of the high pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 in a sample taken from the area not under the effective control of the government of Cyprus," the commission said in a statement.

The EU's executive said it had banned the import of live animals or animal products from the Turkish Cypriot enclave into the EU, and added that it would be sending two experts to the area to investigate.

"The EU would be ready to assist with surveillance if needed. In accordance with a European Commission decision, the Cypriot authorities have taken all necessary measures including placing poultry indoors," it added.

A commission spokesperson said an EU laboratory had confirmed the virus in one of two samples from northern Cyprus provided by Ankara, but she did not expect the EU to take any further emergency action at this stage.

"We are confident our measures are holding," spokesperson Barbara Helfferich said, adding that the commission expected to have more details on Monday.

Ferdi Sabit Soyer, prime minister of North Cyprus, which is recognized only by Ankara, told reporters all the poultry in an area within a three kilometer radius around the village of Incirli, where the two samples were taken last week, had been culled.

"The radius is now 10 km. We are checking all people and cars going in and out of the area to make sure no birds are transported," he said.

"We call on the Greek Cypriots to work with us as this is the only way we can prevent the spread of the disease."

Soyer said no humans were affected by the disease at present. The government was to meet the EU experts later on Sunday and would implement any suggestions.

Greek Cypriot Agriculture Minister Timis Efthymiou said:

"For the present there is no decision to close any of the crossing points and no additional restrictions have been placed by the EU than are already in force."

Bird flu has killed at least 83 people since it reemerged in Asia in late 2003, according to WHO figures.

Experts believe the H5N1 virus is contracted through close contact with infected birds, but fear the virus may mutate to enable it to spread easily among humans, sparking a pandemic that could cause millions of deaths.

European Union veterinary experts last week extended a ban on imports of captive live birds from outside the bloc for a further four months to guard against the spread of bird flu. *Reuters*

Japan's elderly take to crime

TOKYO—CRIMES COMMITTED BY elderly people in Japan have risen sharply in the past 15 years, a trend that has officials worried as the population ages rapidly due to longer life spans and a falling birth rate.

Police data show that people aged 65 and older accounted for more than 10 percent of those arrested or taken into custody for crimes other than traffic violations in Japan in 2005, compared with just 2.2 percent in 1990, the Asahi newspaper said on Monday, citing National Police Agency data.

Theft topped the list of crimes committed by the elderly in in 2005, while 141 elderly people were arrested for murder—more than three times the number in 1990, the newspaper said.

Nearly one-third of the victims of crimes committed by the elderly in 2005 were spouses, it added.

Agency officials would not confirm the report, which also said the Justice Ministry was seeking funds to research the problem.

In March, an 81-year-old man arrested on suspicion of strangling his 73-year-old wife said he had killed her after a quarrel over food she had prepared, Asahi said.

Nearly one in five Japanese is aged 65 or older, and the ratio is expected to rise to one in four over the next decade as policy makers struggle to deal with a demographic shift that could deal a heavy blow to the economy.

Japanese worries about crime in a land once seen as one of the world's safest have focused in recent years on offenses by foreigners and youth. Despite such concerns, the number of penal code offenses known to police declined by 6 percent in 2004, the last year for which official data has been released. *Reuters*

Australia PM Howard denies knowledge of bribes to Saddam

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIAN PRIME Minister John Howard on Monday denied knowing about bribes paid by the country's wheat exporter AWB to Saddam Hussein's Iraq under the UN's corruption-tainted oil-for-food program.

"We were in no way involved with the payment of bribes," Howard told national radio Monday. "We didn't condone them, we didn't have knowledge of them, but we did work closely with AWB.

"I make no bones about that. I had no reason to believe that AWB Ltd. wasn't just going all out to preserve Australia's wheat sales to Iraq," he said.

An official inquiry Monday heard that Howard wrote to AWB's chief executive in July 2002 after Baghdad threatened to cut wheat imports because of Australia's support for the United States ahead of the war on Iraq.

"In view of the importance of the matter, I suggest the government and AWB Ltd. remain in close contact in order that we can jointly attempt to achieve a satisfactory outcome in the longer term," Howard wrote to CEO Andrew Lindberg.

Shortly afterward, Lindberg and officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) visited Baghdad and secured the wheat contracts, allegedly by agreeing to pay increased kickbacks.

A United Nations report last year charged that AWB had paid some $220 million in kickbacks to secure $2.3 billion in wheat contracts with Iraq under the 1996-2003 oil-for-food program.

The program allowed Iraq to export oil to buy food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies under UN supervision to lessen the impact of international sanctions on the Iraqi people.

Howard said he had met with the AWB after Lindberg's return from Baghdad and was "pleased" that the problem had been resolved.

Asked whether he knew how the AWB achieved the favorable outcome, Howard said: "No, they didn't go into any detail. We had no suspicion, no suggestion there had been any bribes paid."

Howard established the commission of inquiry into the formerly government-run Australian Wheat Board in November, but restricted it to examining allegations of wrongdoing by private companies.

The opposition Labor Party is pressing for the terms of reference to be widened to allow the commission to investigate the government's role in the scandal.

"Anything less is a cover-up of what has been, to my mind, the worst piece of corruption I have seen in my 25 years as a federal politician," said Labor leader Kim Beazley.

He took aim at Howard as well as Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer.

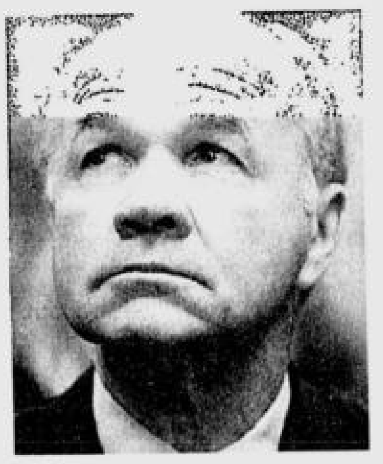
"They're like the three wise monkeys. They see no evil, they speak no evil, they hear no evil," he told reporters.

"But I believe they knew all about the evil.

"And I think that the reason they're scuttling away from a term of reference that would examine that is because they've got a case to answer." *AFP*

Judgment day for ex-Enron chiefs Lay, Skilling arrives

HOUSTON, TEXAS—JUDGMENT day arrived for Enron Corp.'s two former chief executives Monday, some four years after the fraud that rocked the corporate world.



LAY AFP

Kenneth Lay and Jeffrey Skilling were set to go on trial in Houston federal court, facing hefty prison terms for securities fraud and conspiracy in connection with the 2001 meltdown of the energy giant that was one of the largest US corporations.

Scores of news organizations are in Houston to cover the opening of the trial, which could last several months. As with other federal court trials, it will be open to media only with pen and pad, or sketch artists. No photographs or recordings are allowed in the courtroom.

Unlike some of the other CEOs accused of crimes, Lay and Skilling have not shied from publicity ahead of the trial.

"We're ready; bring it on," Skilling, 52, said in an interview last week with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

"But I have absolutely no question that what we did at Enron was correct. I have absolutely no question that we are innocent of any criminal wrongdoing. I'll stand by that. I'll make that fight."

Lay, 63, who founded Enron and served as chairman and as CEO except for a short time when Skilling occupied the job, has set up his own website and has given speeches proclaiming his innocence.

Legal analysts said prosecutors must steer clear of the minute details of the fraud and focus on lying and deceiving by Lay and Skilling. The two former CEOs will seek to show that they were simply following the advice of their accountants and lawyers.

The trial will be a major test for the US justice department task force set up after the massive scandals at Enron, WorldCom and other companies to crack down on corporate misdeeds.

"This is the championship game," said Maryland securities lawyer Jacob Frenkel, a former government prosecutor who has worked in enforcement with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Although prosecutors have been able to put several key executives behind bars, an acquittal in the Enron case, the most notorious scandal of this era, could be a severe blow to the government, the lawyer noted.

"If Skilling and Lay are acquitted, corporate fraud prosecutions in the United States will be judged at best as a moderate success and possibly even a waste of money," he said.

"I don't think it's a slam dunk either way," said Ross Albert, a former prosecutor and SEC enforcement lawyer who practices securities law in Atlanta, Georgia.

The complexity of the case—Enron's myriad of special entities it created to hide its debts—was a reason for the long delay in bringing the case to trial. But experts said prosecutors have to be able to state the fraud in clear terms. *AFP*

Fugitive Malaysian heads new regional jihad group

JAKARTA—FUGITIVE MALAYSIAN militant Noordin Mohammad Top has declared himself the leader of a previously unknown regional extremist group, Indonesia's police chief said Monday.

General Sutanto said Noordin, accused of masterminding a string of deadly attacks in Indonesia which have left hundreds dead, had named himself head of "Tandzim Qoedatul Jihad."

"In his own account related to the Bali bombings on Oct. 1, 2005, Noordin M. Top said that he was the leader of the Tandzim Qoedatul Jihad for the Malay island group, which includes Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines and parts of several other Asian countries," Sutanto said.

Noordin declared himself chief after his compatriot Azahari Husin, a master bombmaker, was killed by police during a raid on his hideout in East Java last November, the police chief said.

Sutanto, who was speaking on the sidelines of a hearing with lawmakers, said the information came to light after police interviewed several suspects and witnesses following last October's triple suicide bombing on Bali island, which killed 20 bystanders.

Police have so far arrested 11 suspects, mostly from Central Java province, in connection with the latest Bali suicide attacks. All were close to Noordin, Sutanto said.

He gave no further details of the organization.

Azahari and Noordin were key leaders of the al-Qaida-linked regional terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), but experts have said they believed the pair had split to create an even more hard-line group. *AFP*

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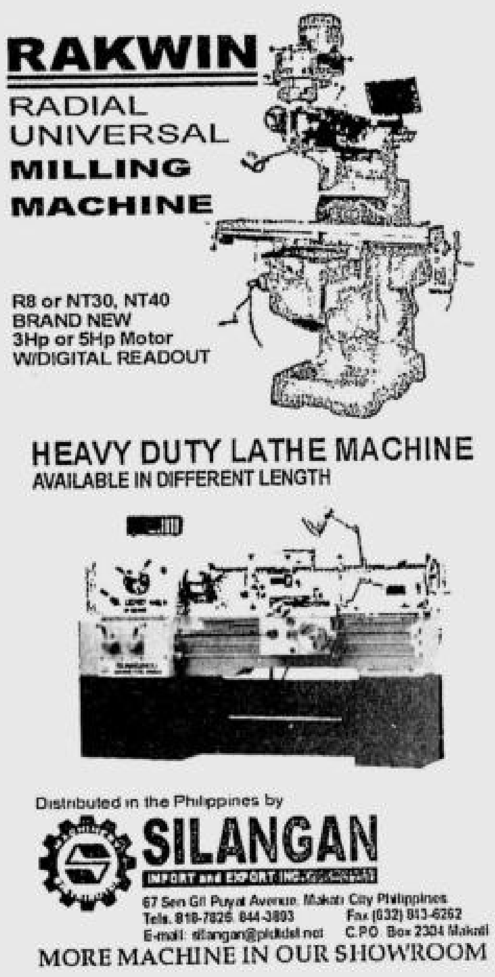

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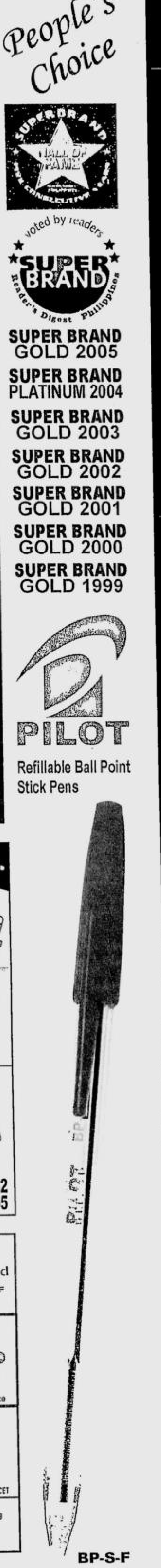

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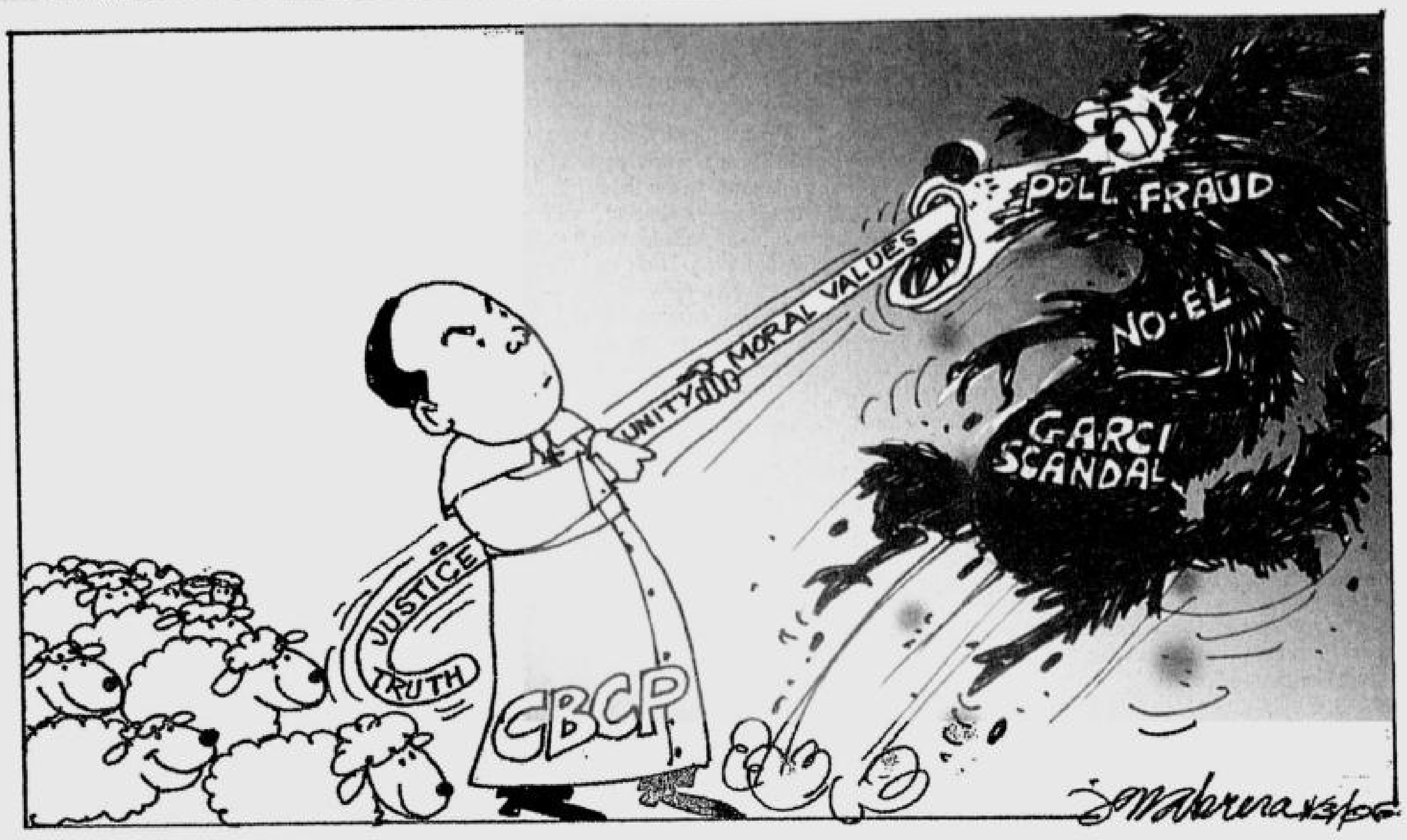


Pride

EDITORIAL

THE SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS LAST WEEK said that amid economic uncertainty, political instability and the exodus of Filipinos for abroad, it found one thing constant in the surveys that it conducted through years: the Filipinos' pride in being Filipino. Mahar Mangahas, SWS president, said: "Pride in being Filipino is very high and impervious to crises. Public morale and equanimity is dented but indestructible." Yearend figures of SWS in 2005 showed that four out of every five Filipinos looked forward to the new year with hope and felt proud to be Filipino.

The disclosures are very reassuring, coming, as they do, in the face of the common misimpression that most of us are ashamed to be identified as Filipinos.

There are many things that should make us proud to be Filipinos, despite the pervasive poverty, the unending political turmoil, the widespread corruption and the huge mess that politicians over the past half century or so have made of the country.

We can take pride in our people, the nation's greatest asset. Filipinos are known all over the world as a gentle, hospitable, caring and smiling people. We are a talented, intelligent, creative people, but our talents are stunted in our stultifying political, economic and social environment.

We can take pride in our national heroes who were multi-dimensional figures, not just military leaders or warriors. Our national hero, Jose Rizal, was a Renaissance man—doctor, writer, poet, polyglot, naturalist and agriculturist.

We can take pride in our inventors, one of whom, Eduardo C. San Juan, designed the lunar rover, more popularly known as the moon buggy. It made possible a wide-ranging exploration of the moon's surface during the 1971 Apollo lunar mission. Among other Filipino inventions that are benefiting thousands, if not millions of people all over the world, are the incubator, the fluorescent lamp, the videophone, the one-man band piano (that led eventually to the development of the karaoke), the bread toaster, the reflectorized circular lamp and the power tiller.

We can take pride in our music. Someone once said that you can take everything away from Filipinos, but their music will always remain with them. Filipinos are known all over the world for their musicality and great love of music. It is no wonder that many Filipinos have achieved renown on the world's concert stage for both classical and popular music.

We can take pride in our artistry, in our creative talent and skills which are manifest even in everyday things like furniture, clothes, home décor and paper wrappings of sweets.

We can take pride in our country that is blessed with a good environment and rich natural resources. We have verdant fields, lush forests (that are steadily being denuded by illegal loggers and slash-and-burn farmers) and great lakes, rivers and other bodies of water and unique flora and fauna. A Saudi journalist who visited the Philippines years ago told a Filipino journalist: "God gave us oil but took away the trees, plants and water. In your case, God did not give you oil, but gave you trees, plants and water."

We can take pride in our tourist spots like the Banaue Rice Terraces, the eighth wonder of the world; Boracay, arguably the finest white sand beach on earth; Mount Mayon, the perfect cone; Maria Cristina Falls; Camiguin; Sagada and Baguio; and the whole of Palawan.

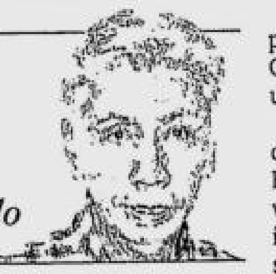
We can take pride in our unique political innovations such as People Power which produced Edsa I and Edsa II, the first toppling a corrupt and repressive dictator, and the second ousting an incompetent and plundering president. People Power became the model for the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, the Solidarity Movement in Poland, the Rose Revolution in Georgia and the movement that dismantled the Berlin Wall and ultimately led to the reunification of East and West Germany.

Despite the poverty, the political instability, the corruption, the depletion of our natural resources by unthinking people, the exodus of thousands for greener pastures abroad, Filipinos are still proud to be Filipinos. They still see hope for the country. Filipinos are a people struggling to come out and grow to their full potential as human beings. If only they could have a leadership that would inspire them and bring out their greatness, they would virtually have a heaven on earth in the Philippines.

Upheaval's handmaid

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



THIS IS A TOWN OF FEW SECRETS. SO, PEOple ho-hummed when our home-grown communists (a.k.a. "militant left") announced they'd link up with military rebels to eject President Macapagal-Arroyo and her scandal-hounded regime.

Bayan Muna's Rep. Teodoro Casiño claims, believe it or not, that his comrades are the ones being wooed. And the suitor? Disgruntled Armed Forces and Philippine National Police officers. "(They) are reaching out to people's organizations to get support for their grievances."

Commissars never could muster numbers enough to clamp on a "dictatorship of the proletariat." Of the one million demonstrators they promised for their State of the Nation Address rally, only 40,000 showed up, the INQUIRER and Reuters reported.

Constitutional values have not totally atrophied among officers, politicians' abuses notwithstanding, notes the Yale University study, "Closer Than Brothers." Thus, all the coups staged failed. "A world record of sorts," it adds.

The Magdalo mutiny collapsed, within 24 hours, when people didn't head for the barricades.

Abandoned after China scrapped its "people's war" exports, the Reds here have propositioned the opposition to individual candidates. The latest was Joseph Estrada's bid to break his shackles with a "transition government."

Military withdrawal of support would be "crucial" for ousting the President, Casino admits. But the rebels' "exact role in her ouster will be determined, to a large extent, by what the people's movement can accept."

Hele, hele, bago quiere, chuckles a Zamboangeño friend. That's bastardized Spanish for Hamlet's "The lady doth protest too much." The key question, he says, is: Will the whole military agree to bed down with a movement that gloats over body counts of slain cops and soldiers?

And do these self-anointed "liberators" look beyond our shorelines? "The 20th century's last two decades (saw) the number of authoritarian countries fall from almost 70 in 1980 to fewer than 30 in 2000," notes the United Nations study, "Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World."

"People power in the Philippines removed Ferdinand Marcos in 1986," the UNDP study adds. Latin American juntas toppled, starting with Ecuador's and Peru's. The Berlin Wall's collapse marked the turning point for Central and Eastern Europe. In Africa, long-standing dictators, including Mali's Trarore and Malawi's Banda, were sent packing.

Despite setbacks, as in Congo or Sierra Leone, the progress toward more open societies continues. Lebanon's "Cedar Revolution," Liberia's free polls and Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" underscore this trend.

The Magdalos, nonetheless, would haul all, whether we like it or not, back to caudillo rule. Their junta would clone Marcos' "Rolex 12," Thanom Kittikachorn's Thailand or Augusto Pinochet's Chile.

The comrades, likewise, would herd all, like it or not, to a regime that'd replicate Orwellian systems: Kim Il Sung's North Korea, Walter Ulbricht's East Germany or the Gang of Four's China.

Even a cynical marriage of convenience would never reconcile our would-be saviors' clashing objectives. "A marriage of convenience is like a funeral except that you get to smell your own flowers," it's been aptly said.

But these self-anointed "liberators" do have common denominators: to oust a vilified—and in many instances, deservedly so—President by dismantling constitutional structures. And they'd have all of us charge blindly forward into the past. Unfortunately, "the future," columnist George Will once noted, "has a way of arriving unannounced."

It was "natural" for the Left and the Right to confer with each other, retired Commodore Rex Robles soothingly said at the same forum: "They were once together in detention.... Remove the ideology, you will see that the agenda is the same—the search for a good life."

Haydee Yorac, Jose Diokno, Chino Roces, Teodoro Locsin Sr., Jovito Salonga, among other people, were imprisoned by Marcos alongside communists. And they worked to secure a good life for Filipinos. Yet, they never advocated blasting the Constitution to smithereens. Installing a junta, as the rebels demand, or a politburo, as the comrades insist, constituted idiocy for them.

Robles says this proposed union hasn't moved beyond "conferring." It's a pre-nuptial chat then? About what? Sharing of arsenals? Co-financing perhaps? Or dividing positions, if swept into power? Reform policies?

When recaptured, Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon's reform plan was to "taunt" the military with videos of him at Cebu's Camp Lapu-Lapu. That's breath-taking—in its bankruptcy. Such insolvency does little to uproot embedded injustices—corruption, skewed wealth, inept government—that stoke discontent in the countryside and in military camps.

Our so-called democratic structures would be ripped apart by a rebellion of the rich if radical reforms were implemented, says Ateneo University's John Carroll, S.J. So, our leaders settle for "tokenism" or lip service reforms.

"Those who make reforms impossible make revolution inevitable," John Kennedy once cautioned. Martial law dictatorship by Ferdinand Marcos made people power inevitable.

Both the regime and opposition should not be lulled by the unavoidable divorce in this prospective marriage of convenience between commissars and rebels. Lip service has always been upheaval's handmaid.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Holier than him

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THANK GOD FOR ARCHBISHOP ANGEL LAGdameo. It's enough to make you believe God may have something to do with the names of people in this magic-realist country. Remember Ver, Custodio, Camcam and Galman in the past? Today, we have Gloria Arroyo, Defensor, Capalla and Angel. What can I say? Lagdameo is holier than Capalla.

I don't know how much of the new CBCP statement owes to the bitter complaints the bishops have gotten from their flock since they went astray in July with their position finding no cause to ask the person in Malacañang who called up Garci to resign. That July statement, read by Capalla, reminded me uncannily of the Supreme Court position ratifying the Constitution that the Constitutional Convention hastily drew up soon after Marcos declared martial law, a monumental exercise in double talk characterized by double negatives. The Supreme Court said it did not find anything in the way the Constitution was made that would cause it not to uphold it. The CBCP statement last July was a classic in that kind of evasiveness, too.

Forthrightness is what the new CBCP calls for, and it practices what it preaches. It is explicit in its stand. It calls for "a relentless pursuit of truth," something it criticizes Congress for thwarting when it blocked GMA's impeachment, which would have provided a wide avenue for it. "What we have seen are acts of evasion and obstructions of the truth, as in the case of the wiretapping and the Garcillano tapes controversy." The crisis today is fundamentally moral. "Because of this crisis of values in our public life, the common good and the plight of the poor are being ignored."

The CBCP has a number of recommendations, from electoral reform to poverty alleviation. But the moral imperative—ferreting out the truth, discerning right and wrong—is paramount. Does the relentless pursuit of truth apply to GMA's legitimacy? "Of course," says Lagdameo. But the people, he says, have to present "a credible alternative" to remove her. "We may not like the President, but what are the people offering? Who is a credible alternative?"

First off, I agree completely, that the present crisis is a moral one, it owes to a question of right and wrong, justice and injustice, good and evil. The question is whether GMA is the legitimate president of this country, and there is the "Hello, Garci" tape to say she isn't. That cannot be excused as "lapse of judgment" by any stretch of the imagination—not in a democracy at least. That won't go away. That certainly cannot be snowed under by economic considerations or a need to survive, as suggested by that phrase "let's move on." "Moving on" is not just idiotic in the face of an illegitimate rule, it is impossible. It's not just that, gripped as it is by a moral crisis, the government has no time to attend to solving poverty. It is that having no scruples of a moral kind, it has no intention of solving poverty.

That's what I've been saying about Charter change: If you cannot solve so fundamental, so elemental, so stark a problem as determining who ought to rule, how can you hope to solve so complicated, so convoluted, so multi-layered a problem as what system of government to have? You have a president (or prime minister) who steals your vote, you will have a president (or prime minister) who steals your taxes. You cannot move on, you can only move backwards.

But I part ways with the CBCP in some of its other propositions. Chief of them: Why do you have to restrict yourself to constitutional means to oust an unconstitutional government? As I said earlier, what has demolished this country's natural aversion to coups is that its current government is the product of one. The GMA government is arguably a coup, wrought not by guns but by Garci, not by a cabal of soldiers but a gang of carpetbaggers. I myself have repeatedly called for civil disobedience, capped by not paying taxes. Why should I yield my hard-earned money to an illegitimate collector?

More importantly, I do not know why the people should present a "credible alternative" for the Church to ask a usurper to resign. At the very least, when we catch a thief who has stolen our cell phone, we get our cell phone back as a matter of course. We do not have to prove we have better uses for the cell phone than the thief before we can get it back. You catch someone stealing votes, you oust her as a matter of course. You do not have to prove another person can do a better job.

At the very most, as I've also kept saying, contrary to popular opinion, the question of who should replace GMA is not the hardest thing to answer, it is the easiest. Who should replace GMA is who the people want, which is expressed in the vote. What is the problem? The problem is that GMA stole the vote. What is the solution? The solution is to give back the vote to the voters. I do not particularly care if the voters vote for Noli de Castro or even Erap again. I do not particularly care if the voters vote for a dog or a cat. In a democracy, the one who governs is the one the voters voted for.

The idea of the people offering an alternative, credible or not, doesn't make things better, it makes things worse. It adds fuel to the fire. It contributes to a nasty turn in Philippine politics, which is that the vote has become irrelevant people now just think of decreeing what is good for the country, namely themselves. That was what GMA and her cabal did. Why should we want to do the same thing? Every time I get asked that question, "But whom do you want to replace GMA?" my answer has always been, "That is not for me to say, that is not for you to say, that is for the voters to say."

But we're getting there, with no small help from angels.

Pastoral letter should be read in its entirety

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IF READERS ARE TO GO BY WHAT SOME MEDIA have chosén to highlight in the recent pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, titled "Renewing Our Public Life Through Moral Values," they could easily be led to conclude that the bishops have become very hostile to the administration. I read their four-page pastoral in its entirety and found it to be balanced in its treatment. It attacked the administration in some parts and the opposition in others, but it reserved its sharpest indictment for the "destructive" and "chaotic" politics in our midst, while offering solutions to the "moral crisis." I hope the major newspapers would publish it in its entirety, so that readers would get the clear message of our pastors. I found myself agreeing with a number of issues raised there. It was the second pastoral letter, which dealt with mining issues, where I found myself disagreeing with the bishops.

* * *

The first pastoral letter cited the "acts of evasion and obstruction of the truth, as in the case of the wiretapping and Garcillano tapes controversy" and said the search for the truth has to be pursued "relentlessly" through legal and constitutional means. But the bishops also denounced those "who seem to use 'the search for truth' as a means of furthering their political ambitions." They lamented how "truth has become a victim of political partisanship as well as of transactional politics," resulting in a "paralyzing gridlock in the political sphere as partisan interests prevail over the demands of the common good."

* * *

The bishops stressed that the people have "enough of this destructive politics" that has caused "widespread confusion" and "apathy and cynicism." They cited the people's "loss of trust in political leaders from left, right and center, and worse still, in the political institutions themselves which are perceived to be corrupted." The bishops traced the cause of our moral crisis to "the erosion of moral values," manifested by the prevailing "deceit and dishonesty, corruption, manipulation and a deadening preoccupation with narrow political interests."

What is their answer to the moral crisis? A return to the "gospel values" and what they call the "gospel mandate." Here they cite "the many men and women of different faith traditions" who are working selflessly and sincerely to build our nation, such as good and decent police and military men, dedicated laity and religious, NGOs and other associations, and "public servants struggling for integrity and authentic reform of the corrupted institutions they are part of." It is from these inspiring good men and women, said the bishops, that they draw optimism that evil will be overcome. The bishops renewed their commitment to place the Church and its people in the forefront of the campaign to transform our sick society.

* * *

One of the bishops' most laudable points is their reiteration that they "do not condone any resort to violence or counter-constitutional means in resolving our present crisis." They wisely see that such measures would only bring about "new forms of injustice, more hardships and greater harm in the future." I wish they had given this point even stronger emphasis, but their unequivocal stand is in stark contrast to the Senate's deafening silence on rumors of a coup. In this regard, the House opposition is more patriotic. Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla has been quoted as saying that his group would never countenance a coup attempt.

* * *

Where I take issue with the bishops is on specific points, such as their advocacy of a constitutional convention over a constituent assembly. As we all know, a convention is far more expensive (estimated to cost P8 billion, which the cash-strapped government doesn't have) and will take forever to change the charter. Cha-cha advocates say by the time the convention finishes its job, we will have been overtaken by Vietnam and ranked with Cambodia and Myanmar.

* * *

I found quite disturbing the bishops' stand on mining, as expressed in the companion pastoral letter. They propose the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995, whose validity the Supreme Court upheld in December 2004. The Court said that entry of foreign capital into large-scale mining is legal and constitutional. Since that ruling, the government expects some $90 billion in foreign investments to be poured into this sector, and 23 major mining projects are in the pipeline. In the first nine months of last year alone, mining investments were said to have reached $350 million. The bishops, however, reiterating their 1998 opposition to large-scale entry of foreign capital, want the government to cancel existing contracts for fear they would destroy the ecological balance and deprive Filipinos of their patrimony.

* * *

The problem with this point of view is that a big percentage of Filipinos live in abject poverty even if this country is one of the richest in the world in terms of mineral deposits. To my mind, and to many right-thinking Filipinos, it is truly criminal to let our people languish in subhuman conditions when God has given our country plenty of means to help them. The bishops are afraid our people would be unjustly deprived when we open the door to big foreign capitalists. Their reaction is a throwback to the Marcos era and shows the heavy influence of leftist elements in the Church and society. But the inequity could be remedied by putting the necessary safety nets, and once-poor economies such as Chile have shown that this can be done successfully. To let our huge mineral wealth remain idle beneath the earth while the majority of Filipinos remain very poor is not charity, it is stupidity.

Momentum?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"THEY DID NOT REALLY PURSUE THE TRUTH" is Archbishop Angel Lagdameo's dry assessment of the impeachment proceedings against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo last year. Lagdameo, the newly elected president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, was speaking at a press conference during which he read one of two CBCP statements on the national situation.

Echoing Lagdameo's point of view, the bishops' statement called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to pursue "relentlessly" the truth behind the "Hello Garci" tapes and the allegations of electoral fraud these gave rise to. They also firmly opposed moves to cancel the 2007 elections, which is one of the "carrots" being waved at lawmakers and local government officials to get them to join the campaign to amend the Constitution.

Though the CBCP statement falls short of calling for Arroyo's resignation (it says the country has no real alternative to her, yet), the pastoral letter is seen as a step farther than the one the bishops issued in July last year, when oppositionists were counting on them to help speed up the momentum created by Cory Aquino, the "Hyatt 10," the Liberal Party, and business groups.

* * *

THE BISHOPS are also joining this time the campaign to get the Comelec commissioners to resign, saying the calls for their resignation and even prosecution "should not be lightly brushed aside." So while they oppose cancellation or postponement of the 2007 polls, they urge political leaders to get cracking on electoral reforms, including, as they put it, "(transforming the Comelec) into a competent and reliable body beyond reproach."

Speaking of electoral reform, the appointment of retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide, who is also a former Comelec chair, to head a body to study ways to improve the electoral system is ostensibly part of the campaign. But this early, Davide has come under fire for accepting a position from someone, so critics of the President say, who bears the biggest responsibility for the destruction of our electoral system.

I'm willing to give the former "Chief" the benefit of the doubt, at least as far as his motivations are concerned. But let's see how he conducts himself and what conclusions he recommends, especially with regard to the *kapit-tuko* Comelec.

* * *

IN "FAHRENHEIT 9/11," Michael Moore's scathing exposé of the duplicity employed by the Bush administration to whip up support for the Iraq invasion, the controversial documentary maker sneaks into a briefing for potential investors in "post-invasion" Iraq. The speaker talks of the tremendous profits to be made in the country, from reconstruction to oil, from security services to food deliveries.

But little did even Moore know how much money would not only be spent, but even wasted and squandered by American-led occupation authorities. "Tens of millions" of government dollars, a US-government audit found, have been lost, frittered away by careless spending, useless projects, if not outright fraud and theft. An American soldier is reported to have blown as much as $60,000 in reconstruction funds in a casino in this country. And in some cases, cash simply disappeared.

The story is based on reports of an audit of the Coalition Provisional Authority and deals with contracting in south-central Iraq, described as one of the country's "least hostile" regions. And as the Associated Press story details, there's more than enough incendiary material in the "dryly written" reports for one or two Moore documentaries. I'm also looking forward to how Jon Stewart of "The Daily Show," as well as Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien and David Letterman would riff on the waste and thievery.

As the wire report states, not only did the thieves cheat American taxpayers and the Iraqi people (much of the cash came from Iraqi oil revenues), they even ended up killing some folks, that is, apart from the hundreds killed by invasion forces and in the continuing insurgency. In one instance, three Iraqis plummeted to their deaths in a defective elevator in the Hillah General Hospital, an elevator that its contractor had been paid over $600,000 to install.

In another documented case, auditors found that a contractor paid over $100,000 to replace the pumps and fix Hillah City's swimming pool had "merely polished the old plumbing to make it look new and collected the money." When the pool was filled, "the water came out a murky brown and the pool's reopening had to be canceled."

* * *

EVEN by Philippine standards, the amount of graft and corruption that is taking place in Iraq is staggering. Only about a quarter of the $23 million entrusted to military and civilian officials to pay contractors found its way to them. On the other hand, an extremely fortunate contractor was paid $14,000 on four separate occasions for the same job.

The auditors recommended the filing of criminal charges against some of those involved, and in other cases, it asks the US ambassador to Iraq to try to recoup the money—apparently from Iraqi contractors or American contractors in Iraq.

I don't know how or if the charges against the incompetents in the reconstruction authority—some of whom worked in George W. Bush's campaign—will prosper. But at least the audit reports are a start, though much will depend on how seriously the White House considers the charges and how determined it is to bring the wrongdoers to justice.

But I doubt it. The story may paint the picture of a bumbling, slap-happy reconstruction effort throwing too much money at too many projects, but thievery on such a scale could not have taken place without people fairly high up knowing about it. The question to ask now is what Dubya intends to do—and where the axe will fall.

The last of the rain forest

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

FURNITURE SHOPS IN BAGUIO FOR THE PAST two to three years have been displaying mountains of items made from *kamagong* (ebony or iron wood): whole tables, boxes, chairs, stools, vases and massive bowls from wood so hurriedly sawn and carved that cracks have begun to appear. After the carnage in Aurora and Quezon two years ago (that is where the wood came from), I asked the owner if he didn't realize the amount of blood on those items. He shrugged and said that if he didn't buy the wood, someone else would, which is probably the same rationale used by drug dealers and other criminals.

Numerous stalls along Marcos Highway display more kamagong planks and furniture made from it. Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources must have been stricken deaf, blind and mute, both in Baguio and in Quezon Province not to notice the existence of these enterprises.

It is obvious from the lack of appreciation exhibited by people, whose idea of happiness revolves around name brands and the latest craze and fad from abroad, that there is also a lack of knowledge of just how blessed their country is. But then who is there to tell them how unique their country is and that, for example, among mammals that cannot fly, 85 percent are found only in the Philippines (the tree shrew, tarsiers and the tree squirrels are examples). There are also 172 species of birds unique to the Philippines, but of these 75 are endangered.

All of these depend on the forest for survival. We have the third-highest number of globally threatened bird species. It's really distressing to know that Cebu (which has zilch forest cover) had 14 species of birds found nowhere else. Three of these are now extinct and of those that remain, there are fewer than a hundred. Of the Cebu flowerpecker, there were only four species left. These birds are probably doomed as Cebu is bound to continue rationing its water and investing in desalination plants. Obviously, timber is a source of quick profit but only for a very small group.

The other day, there was a news item in the papers regarding flash floods in Aurora, Quezon and Isabela with corresponding loss of lives and harvests. It didn't seem like anyone was particularly aghast or appalled—bothered, perhaps but only momentarily. This is after all a yearly event and the numbers were not enough to shock people into action. (Besides, officials have other preoccupations like replacing incumbents with themselves or their own people.) Foreign donors may have shaken their collective heads because of the amounts that have been donated to mitigate soil erosion and the uselessness of the ban against illegal logging.

I don't really know whether people are aware that soil erosion causes siltation on coral reefs from the muddy water that flows out to sea and that dams like the one in the Magat watershed should have lasted 95 years but because of erosion its life span has been reduced to 40. Destructive flooding has everyone beating his chest in remorse for two seconds before going back to his own life.

It's not like officials aren't aware of the drought that affects several areas of the country caused by rainwater that instead of entering the ground water system flows down denuded slopes and can no longer feed the rivers during the dry season. In Iloilo, only two percent (maybe less) of the watershed is forested. This means that during the dry months, water has to be rationed.

It isn't the only place in the country where water has to be rationed, and the situation can only worsen. You read figures like 450 sq km of agricultural land in Panay being affected, resulting in 118,000 tons of rice lost. Do we conclude that the DENR is helpless or it doesn't care, and neither do the local officials?

Would you believe that for the first time in its 420-year history, Naga City was flooded in 1993 when a typhoon passed through the area of Mt. Isarog? People died, the water rose up to two meters in city streets, and economic damage was tremendous. Deforestation was blamed and everyone knew who was responsible, but nothing happened. Also 27 species of birds found in the national park of Isarog in 1961 had become extinct a quarter of a century later—a dismaying 20 percent of 135 species.

The tragedy of it (aside from the loss of life) is that there are over 500 species of mammals, birds, lizards and frogs found only in the Philippines specifically in its rain forests. Most of them are endangered and, even as we write, the logging continues threatening the flora as well before any scientist has the chance to examine their potential. It does nothing to my sense of national pride to know that there are more endangered species in the Philippines than in any other place in the world when you consider the size of the country.

In Ormoc, there is no longer any watershed and the area is now planted to sugar cane. It is rumored to be owned by just six families. The biggest property supposedly is the mayor's. When a flood hit the area some years back, around 7,000 people died. In one section of the city, 220 survived among the 2,500 residing there. I wonder what the mayor thought and whether he cared one way or another. If he or anyone with the capacity to act wanted to do something about it, then reforestation would have been started and a flood control program put in place.

Snooping

YOUNG BLOOD

Sharon Michelle L. Buhatin

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WATCHING PEOPLE IN THEIR UNGUARDED MOMENTS is a habit I have developed over time. I am no spy or mentally deranged snoop, but merely a curious observer of people, their natural behavior and their eccentricities.

I used to believe that people behaved differently in certain situations, but constant observation has convinced me that we all deal with life's complexities in surprisingly the same fashion. Our eyes sparkle at the sight of our beloved, we get a thrill from discovering a crisp envelope in our mailbox, we flare up when our significant other shows up one hour late for dinner and we get annoyed at finding a long queue of shoppers at the counter when all we are buying is a roll of toilet paper.

Commuting is another art in which I excel. And I like it because it gives me the opportunity to see people as they are.

Once while riding a jeepney on my way to work, I almost got into an argument with a young woman who squeezed her butt into the tiny space beside me. I told her there was room for her on the other side, but she just ignored me. I looked at the passengers behind the jeepney driver, and saw the reason the snooty coed refused to seat there: An Aeta husband and wife were feeding their two children. The father was tearing a biscuit wrapper for his young son while the mother was breastfeeding her little bundle of joy.

Since I felt very uncomfortable, I grabbed a seat beside the Aeta family. The student let out a sigh of relief after getting rid of me. There was not even a trace of remorse on her face for being rude to the *katutubo*. I felt like giving her P5 so she could buy some good manners.

The Aetas seemed to be content in their own little world, oblivious to the fact that they had just been victimized by a bigot. The color of their skin did not make them less human. We were of the same race and forever it would be.

Malls are a convenient place for observing people, because the strata of society are well-represented there, from the ABC classes to the *jologs*. But sadly social prejudice is also very much in evidence in the malls.

It's very obvious that customers who are dressed to the nines are treated differently from those who are clad in worn-out jeans and faded shirts. Sales clerks go out of their way to serve the former. From the moment these demi-gods step into the store, sales people would attend to them earnestly, silently telling them that they are at their disposal. However, many of the same sales clerks mutate into Mr. Hyde when they deal with customers who are not so well-dressed. Sure they will still pay close attention to such customers—but only to make sure they would not hide anything in their bags or their trousers. Strange how some people judge others by the clothes they wear, when clothes merely cover one's skin but not one's character.

I have a confession to make. I often eavesdrop on conversations, thought I seldom do it intentionally. It's just that I can't help overhearing other people's conversations. And this happens frequently because I'm a fast-food junkie!

You'd be surprised at the number of interesting characters that abound in any fast-food joint. The most common are women who think that their pathetic love lives are the most important thing in the whole universe. One time, I overheard a woman badmouthing a former boyfriend who had left her for a guest relations officer in an obscure girlie bar. If curses could kill, her poor clueless boyfriend would have been dead many times over.

It was also in a fast-food outlet that I found confirmation for my theory that most women look at their mothers-in-law as a threat to their marriage. One time, I heard a woman who must have been in her mid-30s telling a friend she could not stand her nosy mother-in-law. She felt that everything she did was not good enough for her hubby's mother and that she was only hanging on to their marriage for the sake of her husband and children.

On another occasion, I overheard a female employee whining about the injustices she had to suffer in her workplace. It seemed she couldn't get along with her colleagues as well as with her boss. She said her co-workers were a bunch of stupid humanoids ganging up on her and gossiping all day. Welcome to the world of human vultures and serpents.

One incident I will have a hard time forgetting happened when I was still in college. Before the advent of cell phones and text messages, there were phone booths in certain parts of the city and P2 was all you needed to make a call. I was standing in line, waiting for my turn behind a dashingly attractive yuppie. The booth was partly open and I was a few inches away so I could hear what he was saying. At one point, he was telling the other party he was sorry he couldn't make it to their date because he had to attend to something urgent and important. After a few minutes, he ended the conversation by saying fervently, "I love you!" As soon as he left the booth, a pretty *tisay* came rushing to him and they had a passionate kiss before walking away hand in hand.

My jaw dropped! I had just witnessed one of life's greatest mysteries: cheating partners! The nerve of that guy to even call his girlfriend when in truth he was spending the night with another woman.

There are certain facts of life that are not taught in school. These are the things we learn as we explore the real world. They come to us in ways we have not even imagined, but the lessons we gain will see us through our lifetime.

Life is a mystery. Observing human life unfolding before our very eyes can make a lot of difference. We may not approve of everything we discover about life for with good and the beautiful come the bad and the ugly, but learning to accept that there are things we cannot change is a great start. So unless they make it a crime to eavesdrop in public, I will continue to search for new prey.

Sharon Michelle L. Buhatin, 26, is an English instructor at the Tarlac College of Agriculture.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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LETTERS

Cha-cha and mining

EIGHTY PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION live below the poverty line. Why is this so? Indeed, our country is among the richest in mineral resources. But it suffers from extractive activities, like mining. Mining operations leave nothing but lethal wastes that affect the people's health and livelihood. Mine tailings that spill into lakes and rivers cause massive fish kill and the death of water sources. Most appalling of all, our experience has shown that mining leads to the forcible evacuation of thousands of indigenous peoples and peasant families, or even worse, the death of many.

We have not yet recovered from the effects of Marcopper spill on the island of Marinduque, which led to the evacuation of 1,200 residents after mine tailings filled 26 km of the Makulaquit-Boac river system, thus flooding downstream areas and communities and contaminating agricultural lands.

The Marcopper tragedy is only one of the mining companies exploiting our mineral resources. Hundreds of others are engaged in ongoing mining explorations in other parts of the country, which have resulted in human rights violations. Many lives have been sacrificed in defense of the national patrimony and sovereignty. Many lives continue to be threatened because of the continuing influx of more mining applications and the continuing operation of many mining companies. The struggle to liberate our country and people from the deadly fangs of foreign plunder becomes more challenging in the face of the threats posed by the proposed Charter change which guarantees foreign investments a 100-percent unrestricted exploitation of our patrimonial wealth.

Until now, our country, despite its claims to independence, remains under foreign control. Such control is killing our national economy, sucking our wealth for the enrichment of foreign investors, when such wealth ought to benefit the Filipino majority most.

It's time to free our country from foreign corporations, as well as from vested interests and greedy bureaucrats. Enough of the human rights violations caused by these so-called "development projects." Cha-cha should not be allowed to pass lest we suffer more from the damning effects of large-scale mining and other extractive operations that practically benefit only foreign interests.

—RODERICK CARPIO,
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Wage war vs greed to find peace

OUR COUNTRY NEEDS EVENTS LIKE the convincing win of Manny Pacquiao over Erik Morales to unite all of us. It has been a wonderful respite from the political bickerings that always make it to the headlines. I just hope the Pacman fever lasts.

Pacman won by discipline and hard work and by following his trainors' strategy. We, too, need some strategies in order to keep our country going. The problem is that anything anti-government makes it to the headlines even if it is all speculation, and it goes on and on, such that truth is lost.

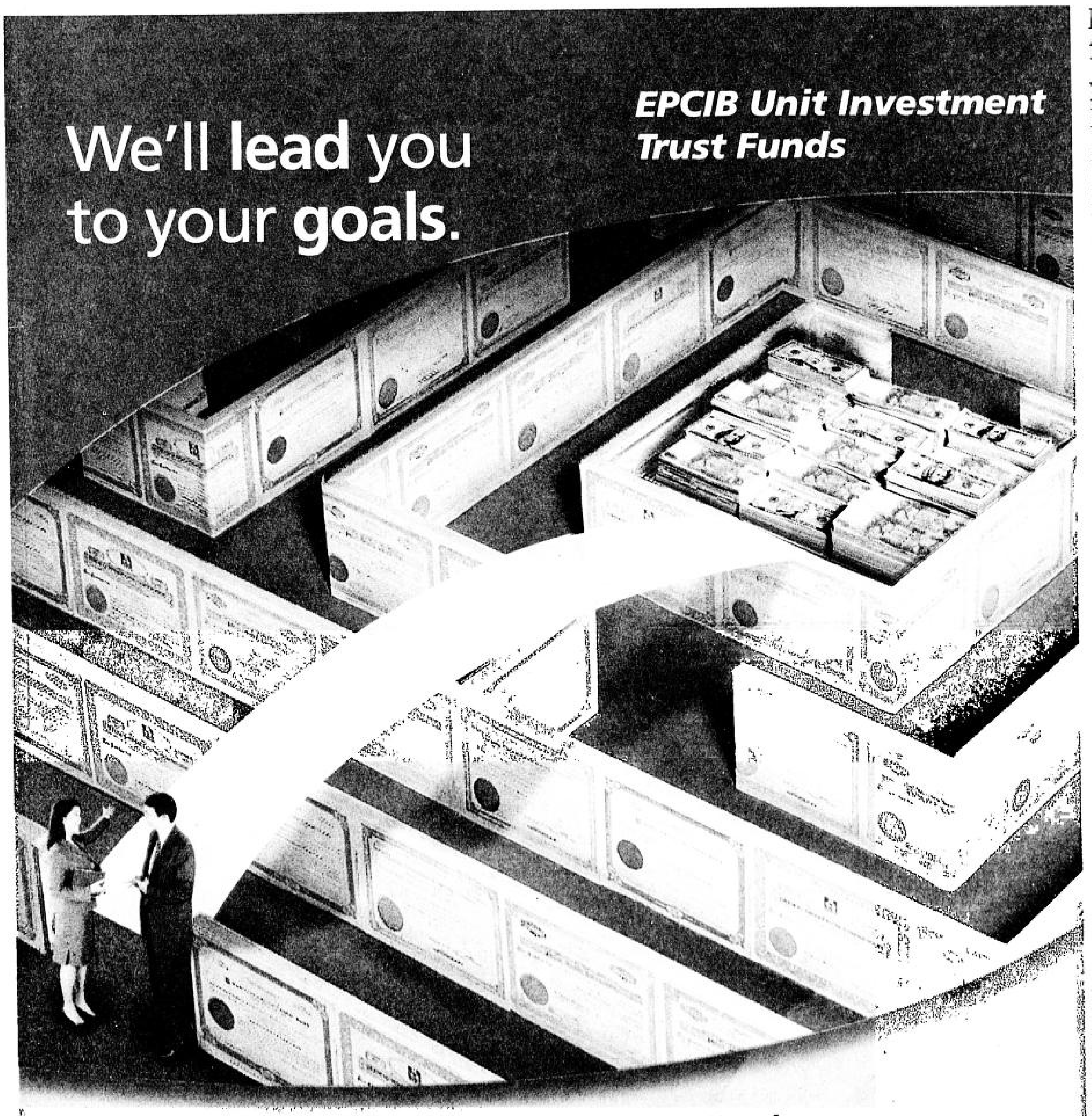
But there are so many good things happening in our country that deserve the headlines as much as Pacman's victory. The large headlines are sometimes also deceiving, unless one takes the trouble to read the whole article, something which, perhaps, only a few bother to do.

I also subscribe to IHT and they gave some wonderful news about us last Jan. 12 which unfortunately very few of our countrymen must have read. A *balikbayan* relative came home a few weeks ago and remarked at how impressed she was at our country's development. A very refreshing statement that ignited some patriotic flame in me.

I've been trying to think why some politicians always vie for the presidential seat when there's already someone there. Is it an innate chauvinistic attitude? We must admit that our President is trying her best in spite of all the bickerings Why not give her some peace and just start fighting for the presidential seat when her term's end is near?

We just celebrated the feast of our Lady of Peace. Let's ask her for peace for the world, for our country, for our families, and for ourselves. We can only have peace when we make war on our greedy ambitions and selfishness.

—ELAINE SARMIENTO,
15 Sta. Lucia, Pasig City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MSU appointment followed precedent

WE THANK THE INQUIRER AND RYAN D. Rosauro for running the news report "Fight on for MSU chancellorsip" in its Jan. 29 issue.

We would like, however, to point out some facts for your readers' better appreciation of the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology's fight for the retention of its present chancellor.

Chancellor (in holdover capacity) Marcelo P. Salazar joined the MSU-IIT 33 years ago as a faculty member. He was the director of the School of Engineering Technology before being appointed vice chancellor for academic affairs and then chancellor in the year 2000.

In the institute's history, the precedent in reappointing sitting administrators was set when Prof. Manaros Boransing, the youngest, at 34, then vice president for administration, MSU Main Campus, was appointed dean of the institute, and later as university vice president for MSU-IIT.

He served for three terms, or 16 years, before Dr. Camar A. Umpa became MSU-IIT chancellor in 1989, serving for 10 years before being elected MSU System president.

Boransing is now the education undersecretary for Mindanao Affairs and is credited with jump-starting the MSU-IIT as the first autonomous campus of the MSU System.

—LORNA O. TOLENTINO, acting campus secretary, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), Iligan City

Cutting contradictions

WE WISH TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING CLARIfications on some points presented in the editorial titled "Deficit in candor." (PDI, 1/27/06)

1. "The deficit narrowed because of expenditure cuts rather than rising revenues." This is inaccurate. The deficit narrowed because of both. Some P20.9 billion in savings were made from lower interest payments because of improved investor confidence, lower costs due to cost-cutting schemes and the implementation of the procurement law.

Revenues exceeded the goal by P12.6 billion. While it's true that the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs were below their targets, the Bureau of Treasury more than offset their collection shortfalls. BIR and BOC performance is being improved through medium-term administrative reforms and this cannot be done in a year.

2. "While the government expected to raise P7.5 billion in additional revenues from the sin tax, the actual increase was only P2.09 billion for the whole year."

The revenue projection from the sin tax law is premised on a normal year without judicial encumbrances. The year 2005 was an abnormal year in several respects:

a) Every time excise tax rates are adjusted, collections drop by 25 percent during the next two quarters as manufacturers advance the release of their stocks a quarter before the effectivity of the new rate.

b) A TRO was issued on sin tax collections in the Subic port, and shipments were directed toward this port.

3. "Besides, cost-cutting seems farthest from the mind of President Macapagal-Arroyo as she continues to fight for political survival."

The editorial contradicts itself with this statement as it mentioned in a previous paragraph that "the deficit narrowed because of expenditure cuts." The words "cost-cutting" and "expenditure cuts" should mean the same.

It is unfortunate that in the attempt to turn a positive economic development for the country into negative news, the editorial sacrificed accuracy and consistency, resulting in a skewed analysis of an important development in our economy.

—GIL S. BELTRAN, undersecretary, Department of Finance

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'Jueteng' haunts PNP on anniversary

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE RESURGENCE OF THE ILLEGAL NUMBERS game "jueteng" in many parts of Luzon haunts the Philippine National Police on its 15th founding anniversary.

Yesterday, the police sacked yet another town police chief for his failure to stamp out the vice even as top officials conceded that licking jueteng is turning out to be more complicated than it appears.

Director General Arturo Lomibao said he relieved Supt. Renato Angara, chief of the Tanuan, Batangas Police Station, after the Anti-Illegal Gambling Special Operations Task Force arrested last week six men during a jueteng draw in the town.

Lomibao also quoted sketchy reports as saying the antigambling unit based in Camp Crame has also successfully operated against people operating an illegal numbers game similar to jueteng in Dipolog City.

"If it turns (out) to be true, we will probably relieve the chief of police (there as well)," he said.

The PNP marked its 15th anniversary with President Macapagal-Arroyo as its guest.

Police are set to expand the scope of their anti-illegal gambling drive. Initially, the police have only gone after jueteng dens.

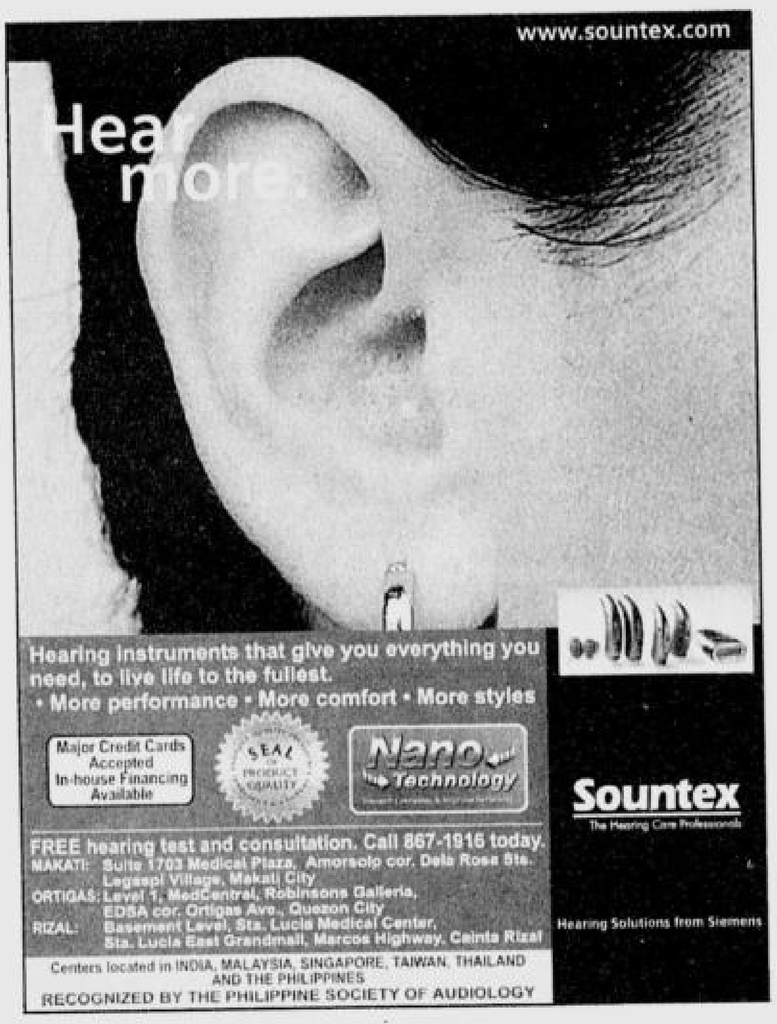
"I think there are other illegal gambling activities which are similar to jueteng," Lomibao said. "I think they should also be given equal concern."

Some eight months after the police began their crackdown on jueteng, officials are seeing the other effects of the campaign, including the displacement of thousands who depended on jueteng for jobs.

The lack of an alternative livelihood to jueteng was the main reason collectors, or *cabos*, are forced to "bite the bullet," according to the PNP chief.

"I guess we should really find an alternative livelihood for the people who are affected," he said. "And according to statistics, thousands (are affected) and if people cannot find other means of livelihood, they will bite the bullet, so to speak."

The Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office is planning to set up small town lottery in the countryside as a means of employing people, according to Lomibao.



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6 in Batangas 'jueteng' held

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—ANTI-ILLEGAL gambling operatives of the Philippine National Police from Camp Crame swooped down on a suspected "jueteng" den in Tanauan City on Friday and arrested six suspected members of a syndicate running the illegal numbers game, police said yesterday.

The arrest came just two days after PNP chief Director General Arturo Lomibao issued a stern warning to all his men against tolerating jueteng.

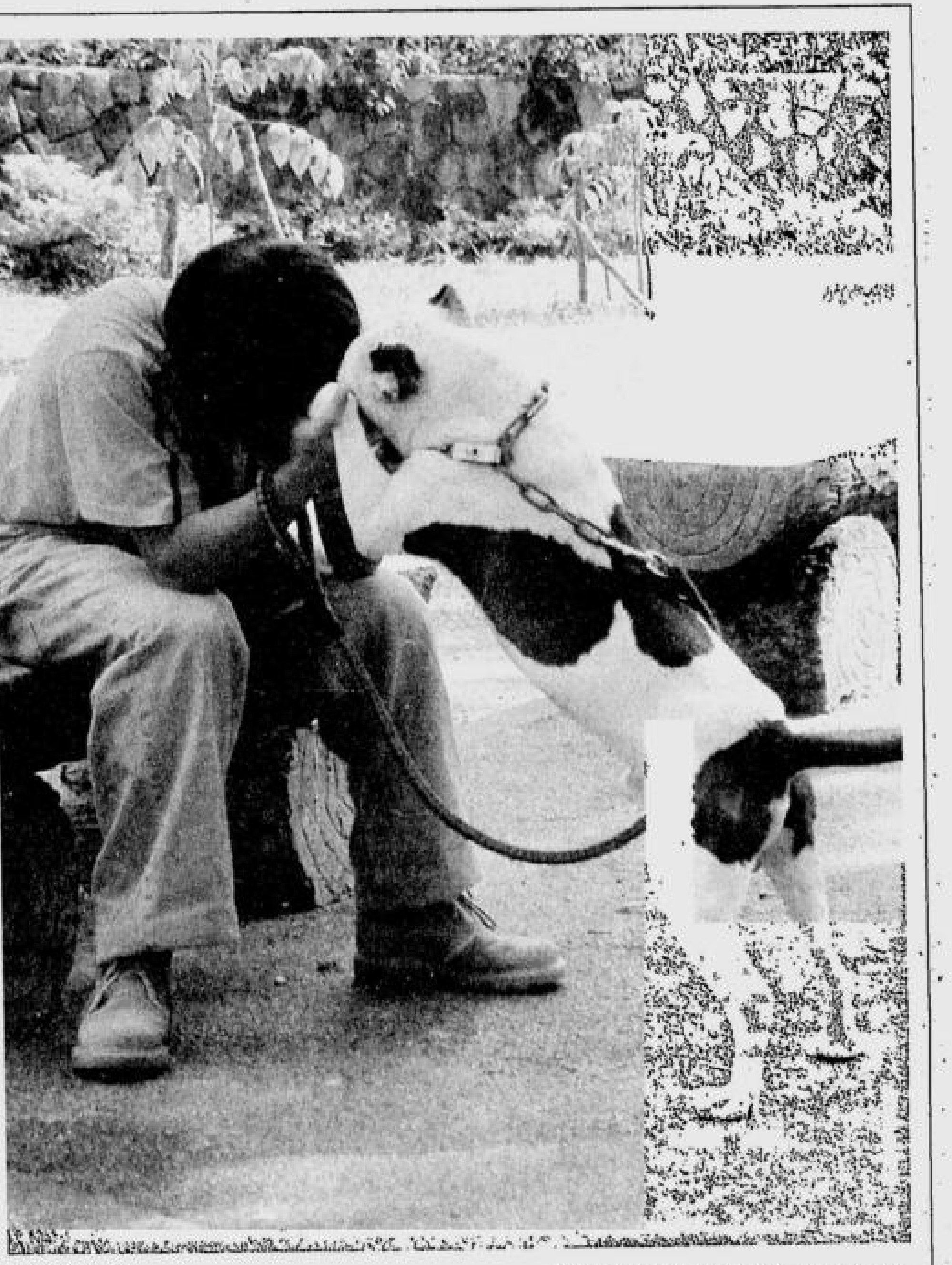
Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez was mentioned as one of the country's biggest jueteng financiers during the Senate hearings about the illegal gambling operations last year.

Sanchez had denied involvement in jueteng.

Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa, Calabarzon police director, identified the arrested persons as Ambocio Vedra, 61; Maximo Gonzales, 53; Eriano Ladislao, 63; Bonifacio Langga, 40; Pedro Palma, 57; and Dario Dinglasan, 38.

Verzosa said he had already ordered the relief of Supt. Renato Angara as the chief of police of Tanauan City.

Supt. Manuel Abu was appointed as the officer in charge of the city police office, he added.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



FRIENDS

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Dogs take center stage this year as a result of the Chinese lunar calendar that says 2006 is the Year of the Dog. At the Wright Park in Baguio City, a man enjoys his leisure time with his pet dog.

Gov't, Church execs give backing to N. Vizcaya bishop vs 'jueteng'

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—GOVERNMENT and Church officials in Cagayan Valley have supported Catholic Bishop Ramon Villena, who has been besieged by demands for jobs from "jueteng" bet collectors here.

"Please know that your fellow anti-jueteng, anti-wrong crusaders like me are here to support you," said Isabela Gov. Maria Gracia Cielo-Padaca in a text message sent to Villena.

Padaca, along with other government and Church officials, extended their support for the Nueva Vizcaya bishop following the recent move of about 150 displaced jueteng workers to mass up at his house in Barangay Luyang here asking for jobs.

The group, composed of *cabo* (head bet collectors) and *cobradores* (bet collectors) from various towns in the province, blamed Villena for their difficult life since jueteng operations were stopped on Jan. 17.

The operations stopped when the police's anti-illegal gambling task force raided a jueteng den in Solano town.

Padaca said it was not right that *cobradores* blame the bishop for their hardships and the shame that their children suffer in school "simply because what they do is illegal."

Bishop Sergio Utleg, of the Diocese of Ilagan in Isabela, said the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines had expressed its support for Villena in his crusade against the illegal numbers game.

Quirino Rep. Junie Cua said he and Villena would always remain "strong partners" in the anti-jueteng campaign in his province.

Utleg said bishops should not be blamed for their crusade against an illegal activity.

"First, it is the duty of the person himself to look for an honest and legal job. Second, the jueteng lords whom they (*cabo* and *cobradores*) made rich should now help them," he said.

"The government and all concerned should think of how to give honest jobs to all," he added.

On Thursday, Villena called on government officials for a dialogue to discuss the pleas of jueteng workers that they be given alternative sources of livelihood.

Padaca, in a phone interview, said they now have to be more vigilant over the possibility that jueteng might also return to Isabela, after its short-lived comeback in Nueva Vizcaya.
Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Muslims celebrate Islam's New Year

COTABATO CITY—MUSLIMS YESTERDAY CELebrated Amon Jaded, Islam's New Year, with thanksgiving, food offerings and accounting of earnings during the previous year for a compulsory giving of *zakat* (alms) to poor people.

Young generation of Muslims exchanged text messages with New Year's wishes for peace and prosperity.

Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan, of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), declared the celebration as a nonworking holiday in Basilan, Lanao Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Marawi City.

The lunar Hijra Calendar turned to year 1427 when the new moon appeared yesterday morning.

The Muslim calendar is based on the migration of the Prophet Muhammad to Medina from Mecca toward the end of the 6th century.

The first day of the New Year also marked the first day of Muharam.

Old folks, however, avoid long travel from the start of the year until the 10th day, known as *ashura*, is over.

In the writings of Abu Huraira, narrator of prophetic traditions, the 10th of Muharam marked events of biblical salvation, like the reunion of Adam and Eve in the ocean of Desert, after being banished from heavenly abode; the end of the deluge in Noah's time; the culmination of Joseph's sacrifice underneath the well where he was pushed by his siblings; end of Nemeses' tyranny in Moses' time, and Christ's appearance to his disciples in flesh and blood.

But among Sufi and Shiite Muslims, the 10th day is a day of great mourning for Islam. It was during that day that Amir Hussein, the prophet's grandson, was slain by Islamic extremists led by Abu Yajid. *Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Ang Bangkong May Damdaming Bayan

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of December 29, 2005

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	7,331,084,791
Due from Bangko Sentral		12,436,167,981
Due from Other Banks		1,925,522,838
Interbank Loans Receivable		20,706,649,570
Trading Account Securities (Net)		208,818,201
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		107,396,810,892
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		120,094,143,494
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		-
Equity Investments (Net)		2,843,052,997
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		5,111,574,561
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		13,587,598,208
Others		18,813,973,715
TOTAL ASSETS	P	310,455,997,248
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	81,138,452,573
Savings Deposits		135,377,501,280
Time Deposits		26,327,941,234
Special/Other Deposits		758,920,376
Due to Bangko Sentral		107,262,923
Due to Banks		76,449,035
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		1,430,344,773
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		451,642,462
Interbank Borrowings		-
Deposits Substitutes		237,058,512
Others		27,656,672,606
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,165,821,734
Other Liabilities		9,028,576,361
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	285,756,643,878
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	11,471,000,000
Surplus		8,603,428,288
Surplus Reserves		2,854,552,221
Other Capital Accounts		1,770,372,861
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		24,699,353,370
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	310,455,997,248
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,417,968,986
Bills for Collection		1,088,563,720
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		12,151,198,000
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(530,620,000)
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		
Invested in:		
- Government Securities		21,295,781,421
- Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks		25,805,490
- Loans and Discounts		162,523,486
- Other Assets		3,274,648,621
Accountabilities:		
- Trust and Other Fiduciary		15,965,699,615
- Common Trust Funds		1,701,130,980
- Investment/Fund Management		7,001,928,423
Other Contingent Accounts		44,277,913,558
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	84,163,783,284

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Deposits of:		
a. Government	P	163,365,233,837
b. Banks		5,935,563,741
c. Trust Department		583,053,818
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law		
a. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 6% (Small Enterprises)		27.43%
b. Prescribed Ratio of Compliance for 2% (Medium Enterprises)		5.80%
3. Amount of Non-Performing Loans		11,447,680,120*
4. Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		7.26 %
5. Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets		37,600,507,783
6. General Provision for Loan Losses		1,103,692,722
7. Specific Provision for Loan Losses		15,647,404,274
8. Return on Equity (ROE)		14.78%
9. Amount of DOSRI Loans/Advances		6,833,110,224
10. Ratio of DOSRI Loans/Advances to Total Loan Portfolio		4.33%
11. Amount of Past Due DOSRI Loans/Advances		17,006

* *Includes Loans Classified as "Loss" which are fully covered by Allowance for Probable Losses amounting to P1,073,454,331.12*

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and GILDA E. PICO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

Sgd. ANDRES C. SARMIENTO
SVP, Controllership Group

Sgd. GILDA E. PICO
Acting President and CEO

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 26th day of January 2006 in the City of Manila, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 12300628, issued in Manila on January 6, 2006 and Residence Certificate No. 07016865 issued in Calamba, Laguna on January 3, 2006.

Doc. No. 236
Page No. 49
Book No. IV
Series of 2006

CESAR S. CABANES
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2006
PTR No. 3020247/1-10-05/MLA
IBP No. 632075/1-05-05/Cam. Sur

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of December 29, 2005

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items	P	7,332,085,381
Due from Bangko Sentral		12,436,167,981
Due from Other Banks		2,027,801,911
Interbank Loans Receivable		20,706,649,570
Trading Account Securities (Net)		208,818,201
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		107,401,107,370
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		120,619,345,857
Underwriting Accounts (Net)		-
Equity Investments (Net)		1,852,665,668
Bank Premises, Furniture,Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		5,241,030,400
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		13,625,092,800
Others		19,470,478,500
TOTAL ASSETS	P	310,927,243,639
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	81,087,712,216
Savings Deposits		135,364,027,944
Time Deposits		26,327,941,234
Special/Other Deposits		758,920,376
Due to Bangko Sentral		107,262,923
Due to Banks		76,449,034
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		1,435,933,287
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounting/Special Programs		451,642,462
Interbank Borrowings		-
Deposits Substitutes		237,058,512
Others		27,656,672,605
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		3,670,824,131
Other Liabilities		9,045,674,512
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	286,220,119,236
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	11,471,000,000
Surplus		8,611,110,066
Surplus Reserves		2,854,641,476
Other Capital Accounts		1,770,372,861
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		24,707,124,403
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	310,927,243,639
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	P	2,417,968,986
Bills for Collection		1,088,563,720
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		12,151,198,000
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		(530,620,000)
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a. Government	P	163,365,233,837
b. Banks		5,935,563,741
c. Trust Department		583,053,818
2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries		
a. LBP Leasing Corporation		
b. LBP Financial Services, SPA		
c. LBP Remittance Co., USA		

I/We, ANDRES C. SARMIENTO and GILDA E. PICO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

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CESAR S. CABANES
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Gov't loses control of rice supply to traders

PILI, CAMARINES SUR—THE government is losing local rice supply to traders buying at P11 per kilogram, P1 more than the purchase price of the National Food Authority that buys rice for P10 per kilogram, a manager of the grains agency here said.

Edmundo Enrique, NFA Camarines Sur manager, said the non-competitive buying price of the government discouraged farmers to sell their harvest to the grains agency's buying stations.

Enrique said last year alone, the output of the palay procurement program here was very low with a mere 800 bags sold to the government's buying stations while the overwhelming harvest of the province went into the warehouses of traders.

Self-sufficient

He said Camarines Sur is self-sufficient in rice, with an average rice harvest of 200,000 metric tons every year.

He said the government procures palay to build stock that would serve as a buffer that can be disposed of anytime to influence the market price and ensure food security.

Enrique said the government responds to food security programs with its buffer stock of imported rice at the NFA warehouses.

He said that this year, at least 1.8 million metric tons of rice will be imported by the government.

The NFA manager said he is offering the provincial government of Camarines Sur a partnership agreement with the NFA to trade palay which, he said, is a way to respond to the competition.

He said he will ask from the provincial government a counterpart of P1 per kilo of palay sold to NFA's buying station to push the government's buying price at par with the traders.

Incentives

Enrique said the NFA offers as an incentive to the provincial government the rights over the procured palay harvest for six months from the period the rice supply was stored in NFA warehouses.

He said the rice stock remains reserved for the provincial government for six months. The deal would allow the provincial government free use of NFA warehouses for four months and charge the provincial government a minimum 1.5 percent of the stock's value starting in the fifth and sixth months.

Enrique said the provincial government, given the rights over the rice stock, can engage in rice trading with other entities to generate profit.

Authorities had tried to stop the monopoly in rice trading by middlemen and traders to no avail. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

1ST BLOOD IN 2006

3 Left activists killed in Bicol, Samar

IROSIN, SORSOGON—THREE more leaders of militant party-list groups Bayan Muna and Anak Pawis were killed in separate attacks here and in Camarines Norte and in Borongan, Samar.

The latest victim of political assassination in Bicol was Councilor Maximo Frivaldo, 39, and a member of Bayan Muna, who was shot dead early yesterday.

Another Bayan Muna organizer was shot dead yesterday by three men riding in a black TMX motorcycle without license plate in Barangay Rawis in Borongan, Samar.

Also killed by an assassin was Abner Dalan, municipal coordinator of Anak Pawis in Capalonga, Camarines Norte.

Dalan, 28, was shot at close range by a lone gunman while on board his motorcycle selling fish in the morning of Jan. 23.

Sources said the suspect took the victim's motorcycle after the shooting. The vehicle has not been recovered until now.

House Deputy Minority Leader and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo identified the slain Samar Bayan Muna member as a certain Antonio Alde Jr., 25, a Bayan Muna organizer and a casual employee at the Eastern Samar provincial governor's Barangay Affairs Office.

Ocampo said based on initial reports that reached Bayan Muna's national headquarters, a .45 cal. pistol was used in Alde's killing.

Chief Insp. Diony Laceda, Irosin police chief, said Frivaldo was shot by a lone assassin inside his home while attending to his three-month-old son.

Frivaldo's wife, Lanie, said they had just entered the house with their baby when she heard gunshots.

Lanie said that upon hearing the shots, she rushed back to the porch where she left her husband and their baby and saw him bloodied.

Her brother tried to run after the killer but was also fired upon, she said.

Witnesses said the suspect was picked up by a companion in a blue scooter about 200 meters from the site of the shooting.

Frivaldo was the former chair of the Philippine Peasants Institute here, his elder brother Marcelo said.

Ocampo said Alde and Frivaldo were the 79th and 80th Bayan Muna members murdered since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power in 2001, and the second and third to be killed this year.

Ocampo said Malacañang should condemn all the political killings and order a manhunt for the perpetrators, be they members of the police or the military.

SATUR OCAMPO

He scored the government's security forces for "considering activists as enemies, and for miserably failing to provide them all with lawful protection due them under the laws and the Constitution." *Bobby Labalan and Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

LYN RILLON/PDI PHOTO

RAINY DAY
President Macapagal-Arroyo gamely shares an umbrella with Congressman Arthur Defensor, of Concepcion in Iloilo, as rainwater dripped from a leaky roof at a stage built for the President's visit. Ms Arroyo later attended groundbreaking rites for the Agnaga-Calamamigan farm-to-market road and distributed free housing units.

ROUNDUP

Man draws death for rape

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte—A 38-year-old father of three was sent to the death row by a regional trial court here for repeatedly raping his daughter. The convict is now awaiting transfer from the town jail to the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, where he will be locked up. The convict, a widower and a native of Calinan, Davao City, was found guilty two weeks ago of forcing his daughter, now 16, into sex for about two years. Based on court records obtained by the INQUIRER last week, the convict impregnated his daughter sometime in 2004. To avoid nosy neighbors, he fled Calinan with his daughter and brought her to Magsaysay, a hinterland municipality in the province. The victim told the court that she was only forced by her father to go with him. *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Sagada folk save landmark

SAGADA, Mt. Province—Residents of this tourist town have pooled their resources to save an important historical structure in the town. The St. Theodore's Hospital (STH), which was built by American missionaries, Rev. John Armitage Staunton and his wife Maria, as a clinic in 1904, was almost closed down last year after it suffered financial losses. Residents, however, would not allow the community institution to fade away, and formed a foundation to save it. "Closing the hospital due to the financial crisis was the easiest option but [its] management council decided to work hard to [start a] foundation," Rev. Fr. Moreno Tugulnay, STH administrative officer, said. He said the Stauntons' mission to improve the lives of Sagadans was their inspiration in putting the health of the community at the top of their priorities. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Politics confuses LGUs

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Local governments are getting confused with the national government's unstable political situation, and this has affected the implementation of development programs, Gov. Victor Agbayani said. "There's too much politics, too little development. How can we take off?" Agbayani told reporters here after he gave the state of the province address at the Urduja House. In his address, Agbayani mentioned the dismal situation of the country in 2004. "Impeachment rather than development took center stage and preoccupied the nation. Governance took the back seat to crisis management. Division and debate stalled the economic and development engines of the nation." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

'Smoke-free' youth

LEGAZPI CITY—The Smoke-Free Committee of this city, through its members, the Legazpi Adventist Community Services Inc. and the Central Albay Adventist Youth Alive, is conducting a three-day live-in facilitator's training for youth leaders in the community on Jan. 27-29 at the LGU Legazpi Training Center and Dormitory. The training, with the theme "Smoke-Free Legazpi, Youth Alive," is a positive peer prevention program nurturing the wholistic development of youth and adults. *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Gunrunners' hideout raided

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Members of the provincial mobile group of the Batangas police raided a suspected lair of a syndicate allegedly involved in gunrunning in San Nicolas, Batangas and arrested two persons in possession of six unlicensed firearms early Thursday. Senior Supt. Francisco Don Montenegro, Batangas police director, identified the arrested suspects as brothers Abelardo and Renato Landicho. Seized from Abelardo's house were various firearms. Montenegro said police raided eight houses, but only that of Abelardo's yielded unlicensed guns. He said the raid was covered by search warrants issued by Lemery, Batangas Regional Trial Court Judge Eutiquio Quitain. Cases have already been filed against the suspects who are now detained at the Batangas police headquarters in Batangas City, Montenegro said. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Bus cuts town's power

OAS, Albay—A bus slammed into an electric post at a village here, resulting in a power outage. The bus also hit the fence of the house of INQUIRER correspondent Michael Jaucian. Bus driver Felix Lubiano, 53, of Carigara, Leyte, said his steering wheel accidentally got locked when he tried to evade a barricade on the highway. No one was hurt. *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

3 towns reclassified

SAN ILDEFONSO, Bulacan—The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) has reclassified the towns of San Ildefonso, Guiguinto and Balagtas as first class municipalities. The BLGF reclassified these towns after they posted P50 million in tax collections and earnings from 2000 to 2003. San Ildefonso Mayor Edgardo Galvez said the reclassification was due to the intensified tax collection campaign of the local government. He said the bulk of collections came from the more than 300 medium-scale businesses and hog farms in his town. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Cop kills fellow cop

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A rookie Manila policeman was shot dead by his fellow police officer after a heated, intoxicated argument in Mabini, Batangas past midnight of Jan. 24. Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa identified the victim as PO1 Joel Cosme, assigned at the National Capital Region office of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. He said Cosme died from several bullet wounds in the chest and other parts of the body while suspect PO1 Nelson Mariano, assigned at the Holding Center of Camp Crame, underwent treatment in Bauan General Hospital after suffering bullet wounds in the thighs. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Water supply interrupted

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Water supply in certain areas here was temporarily cut to give way to the repair of the distribution line in Barangay Sta. Monica, particularly the one beside the Caramuran Bridge where pipelines are leaking. Nikky Villar, Puerto Princesa City Water District supervising internal control officer, said water supply in certain areas was cut starting noon of Jan. 24 and was restored Jan. 26. The repair had to be done, she said, because the leaks were getting worse, even allowing some residents to do their laundry in pools of water that formed from the leaks. *Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Logging blamed for 4-day Isabela flooding

ILAGAN, ISABELA—THE TOP official of the Philippine Reclamation Authority blamed illegal logging in Isabela for the four-day flooding that hit more than 100 villages and devastated P452 million worth of rice and corn in the province.

Silvestre Bello III, PRA general manager, said the denudation of parts of the Sierra Madre mountain ranges resulted in floods in low-lying villages of the province.

The provincial board on Friday declared Isabela under a state of calamity following the floods caused by heavy rains brought about by tropical depression Agaton.

Bello, a native of Isabela, said reports reaching him showed that poachers were conniving with some environment officials in pillaging the Sierra Madre's resources.

He asked officials the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to protect the province's environment and stop their unscrupulous personnel from protecting illegal loggers.

But Felix Taguba, DENR Isabela director, said his agency should not be blamed for the floods.

"Why put all the blame on us? This is a multi-sectoral problem. The local government units, government leaders in the province, towns and barangays should also share the burden," he said.

Taguba said the problem on timber poaching should be immediately addressed. He said villagers involved in this activity should be given alternative jobs to stop the denudation of the forests.

VILLAMOR VISAYA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

MEMBERS of the Ilagan municipal rescue and relief operations team load relief goods and other items for distribution to about 400 isolated families in Camunatan, Ilagan, Isabela Jan. 27.

In Nueva Ecija, heavy rains and floods deprived onion growers in San Jose City of their major source of income after about 1,500 hectares of onion farms, most of which are growing the *tanduyong* (red shallot) variety, were destroyed.

Rogelio Malunay, city agriculturist, estimated the losses at P254.84 million.

"This was the first time that this disaster happened here because of the unusual coming of heavy rains this time of the year," he said.

Malunay said of the 1,850 hectares planted to different varieties of onions in 28 villages in San Jose, only 372 hectares have chances of recovery.

Onion farmers here earn at least P50,000 for a hectare of onion during harvest. The average yield per hectare is 10,000 kilograms.

The buying price of the red shallot variety is between P8 and P10 a kg.

Bongabon Mayor Amelia Gamilla said more than 1,000 hectares growing the yellow and red varieties of onions in their town were destroyed by rains and floods.

Gamilla said losses could reach P112 million. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

EZ2
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SUERTRES
7 3 4

FOUR DIGIT
6 3 6 1

(In exact order)

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Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

MEGALOTTO 6/45
9 25 27 32 38 43
₱40,627,153.80

Something fishy at PCG

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

HAD OAKWOOD MUTINEER MARINE CAPT. Nicanor Faeldon used his head, he wouldn't have been caught.

But it would be difficult probably to ignore love's call. Faeldon was caught in the company of Capt. Candelaria "Candy" Rivas, his alleged girlfriend.

When love beckons, even the most intelligent person loses control.

* * *

Capt. Candy Rivas, a military lawyer, likewise didn't use her head. She knew that agents of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) were hot on Faeldon's trail.

The Isafp might have been remiss in guarding Faeldon, so he was able to escape, but it is still a very efficient spy agency. Isafp agents are experts at tailing their prey. The escape and recapture of Captain Faeldon would make a good romantic novel.

* * *

WHAT'S this I heard from the grapevine that Coast Guard commandant Vice Adm. Arthur Gosingan allowed the payment for an alleged gross overprice in the repair of BRP Kalinga?

In 1999, BRP (Barko ng Republika ng Pilipinas) Kalinga was drydocked for a complete overhaul. The contract price for the repair was P20 million. But Rosswell Enterprises, the contractor, allegedly wanted the Coast Guard to pay P80 million, way beyond the contract price.

Vice Adm. Reuben Lista, Gosingan's predecessor, refused to pay Rosswell even after the owner, Rosita Bonifacio, went up to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Lista told the President the government would lose P60 million if the P80 million were paid. The President agreed with Lista, according to my sources.

But why is Rosswell being paid P80 million for the ship's repair by Admiral Gosingan? The first installment for the overpriced repair work—P26 million—was made on Dec. 27, 2005, my spies at the Coast Guard said. The second and last installment—P54 million— would be paid next month, the sources said.

* * *

SOME Quezon City policemen confirmed an item in this space that a radio-TV network top executive is hooked on cocaine. The broadcaster's cocaine supplier is also a Quezon City cop. The executive reportedly holds regular cocaine-sniffing sessions at his penthouse, but the cops are afraid to raid the place. "Who would dare?" one of my sources said.

Montalban ready for Metro garbage

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A BIG BULK OF METRO MANILA'S garbage may be diverted to the Montalban Solid Waste Disposal Facility in Rodriguez, Rizal, if plans to close controlled dumps in the metropolis push through. "We are ready to accommodate more garbage from Metro Manila," Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo told the INQUIRER.

"We also have a ready plan to expand the facility."

The controlled dumps in Navotas and Quezon City, which accept trash from a few cities in the metropolis, are scheduled for a shutdown three weeks from now, following a provision of Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, which specifies the closure of all open and controlled dumps.

The 14-hectare Montalban Facility is a sanitary landfill and is not affected by the law. It services at least 10 of the 17 towns and cities of Metro Manila. In open dumps, garbage is not treated, unlike sanitary landfills where a filter prevents leachate from seeping into the water table and soil layers are dumped to cover each layer of garbage.

The municipality had also prepared an expansion plan in case the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) decides to divert all of Metro's garbage to the facility, Cuerpo added. The mayor closed the facility for a few days in October last year after the MMDA snubbed his proposal to increase tipping fees from P600 to P800 per ton of garbage. It was reopened after the MMDA promised to look into the mayor's request. Cuerpo said yesterday that instead of the fee increase, the MMDA had promised to implement social projects in the town.

Environmental groups are against the continued operations of the facility. Bangon Kalikasan Movement head Joey Papa had said the area where the facility is located is part of Metro Manila's watershed, and "was once a scenic picnic site."

METROBRIEFS

Fatal distraction

A MAN died after he was run over by a train in Purok 2, Barangay Buli, Muntinlupa City. P03 Randy Rentillo said Roberto Benito, 57, was sending a text message on his cell phone as he was walking along the rail tracks when the Manila-bound Philippine National Railways train hit him. "His back was facing the train so he did not notice it coming his way," Rentillo told the INQUIRER over the phone. Benito's body was brought to the Eastern Funeral Services in Alabang for autopsy.

Jocelyn R. Uy

LRT passenger's unusual cargo

PANIC gripped passengers at the Santolan station of the Light Rail Transit Line 2 in Pasig City yesterday afternoon after security guards found what appeared to be a bomb in the bag of a 40-year-old man. Suspect Zaldy Munda, of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, had voluntarily submitted himself for routine inspection at 1:45 p.m. before boarding the train. But he was turned over to the custody of the Regional Special Action Unit (RSAU) after the guards found five blasting caps, a time fuse and two sticks of suspected explosives in gel form inside his bag. As of press time, the police had yet to determine whether or not Munda intended to bomb the LRT. "We don't want to jump to conclusions. We are trying to determine that through the contacts in his cell phone. So far, he has been very cooperative," National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Vidal Querol told the INQUIRER. Munda, who reportedly worked for a quarrying company, told investigators he was on his way to buy spare parts in Makati City for his vehicle. He is now under investigation at the RSAU headquarters in Pasay City. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Jocelyn R. Uy*

River yields grisly find

TWO DECAPITATED heads were found yesterday in Marikina City, placed separately in black garbage bags which were thrown into the river at the back of the River Park Mall in Barangay Barangka.

PO3 Felixberto Aguila of the city police said the victims "were Chinese-looking" and appeared to have been killed "just about 24 hours ago."

He added that the two could have been killed elsewhere and their heads thrown into the river. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

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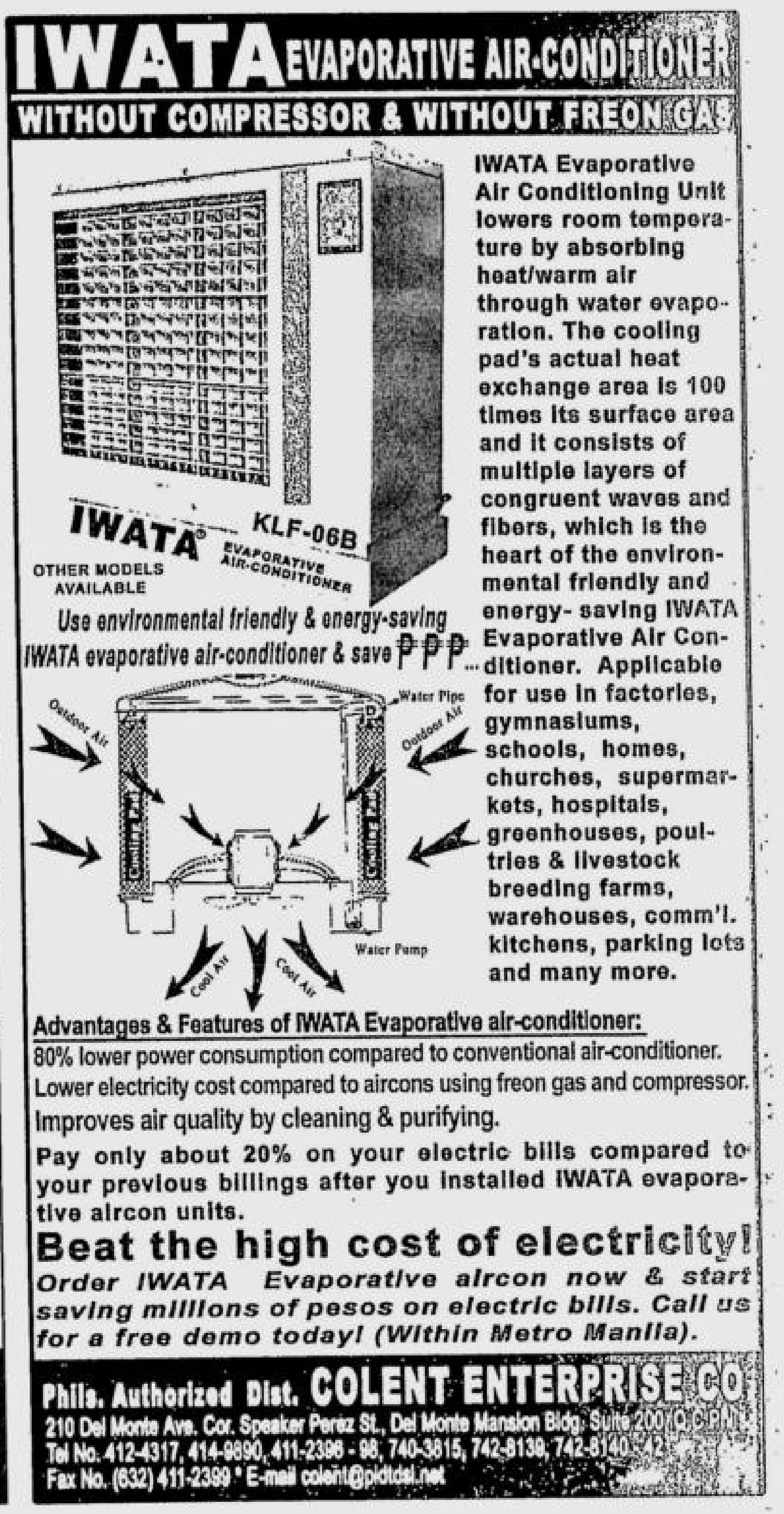

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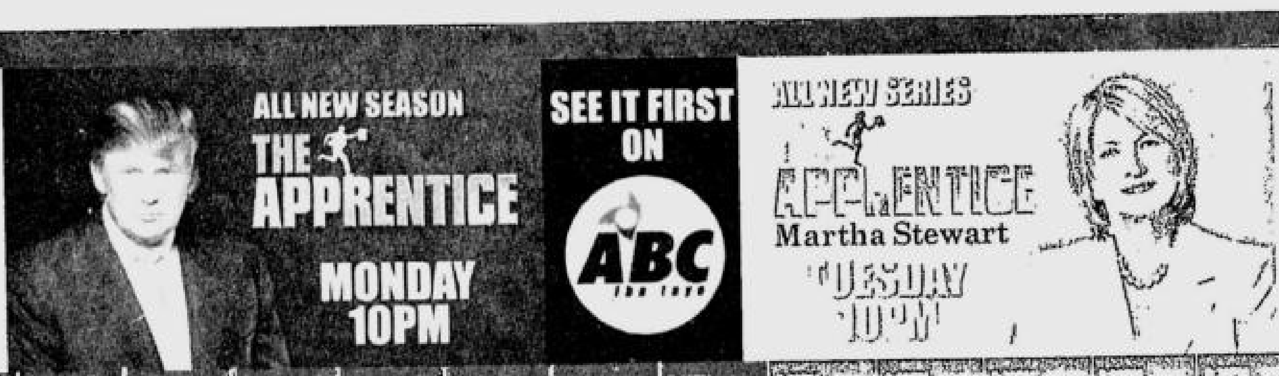
TV GUIDE

Tuesday, January 31, 2006



ALL NEW SEASON THE APPRENTICE MONDAY 10PM
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Channel	[illegible]	[illegible]	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
ABC 5			Winner TV Shopping		World Pool League				Sentro	Mumbai Thrillers	ABC Asian Movies				Big News	The Apprentice		ALI	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Gulong Ng Palad	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Only You	Vietnam Rose	Forbidden Love	Bora			Insider
AXN		CSI (Season 4)		CSI (Season 4)		Maximum Exposure S-2		Lost		24		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Worlds Apart		Fear		Las Vegas	
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dexter's Laboratory	Powerpuff Girls	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Codename: Kids Next Door		The Grim Adv of Billy & Mandy		Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers	Battle B-Daman	Energy Bomb	X-Men Evolution	Samurai Jack	Justice League	Static Shock	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers
Cinema One		Joey Eddie And Lito				Mangarap Ka				Minsan May Isang Puso				Row 4 Ang Baliktaran				Patayin Sa Sindak Si Barbara	
Cinemax	The Dentist			And Justice For All				The Snow Walker				Bad Boys II					Wild Things 2: The Glades		
CNN				Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
Discovery Channel		I Survived		Rides		Engineering Against Disaster		Zero Hour		Wild Discovery		Hour Asia		Conquerors		Zero Hour		Crime Stories	
Disney Channel	Mr Bean The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/ Untalkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Phil Of The Future	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		2005 WPBA All-West Classic East Pions		2005 Kaohsiung World Pool C'ship				Boxing Series Friday Night Fights				Sportscenter Asia	Chinese New Year Badminton C'ships '05				Chinese New Year San Mig Asian 9-Ball Tour		Sportscenter Asia
ETC	The Insider Weekend	Outback Jack		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		One Tree Hill 2		The O.C. 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
EWTN	Catholic Social Teaching	Angelus (3:15 PM)	ABCatholic	Angel Force	Angels Of God	Rosary With Mother Angelica	The Gospel Of John	EWTN Gallery	Lord, Have Mercy	The Journey Home Encore		Council Of Faith	Good Or Evil- Who Decides?	Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	Rome Reports	Web Of Faith	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record w/ Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	Date With Tiffany		Dragonball Z	Slam Dunk	Frog Prince	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Sugo	Etheria	Starstruck 3	Jewel In The Palace		Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	McLeod's Daughters IV		Mr. Saint Nick (3:50 PM)			Who's The Boss? II	Bewitched	The Nanny	Strong Medicine		Judging Amy		Back When We Were Grown Ups			Family Law III (10:35PM)		Strong Medicine (11:25PM)
HBO				Surviving Picasso (4:15PM)				The Making Of Rome (6:15 PM)	Legends of the Fall (6:45 PM)					Rome Ep 11 The Spoils		Rome Ep 12 Kalends Of Feb		Bad Boys	
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		ME TV		Outrageous	Chili Factor	The Scene	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show w/ David Letterman		Raw				Batman	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	The Late Show w/ David Letterman		The Late Show w/ David Letterman	Comedy Central Presents	South Park	The Man Show
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		Who's Wedding Is It Anyway?		Road & Track	Back To Basics
MTV Philippines	MTV Screen	Spring Break	Dyes		Punk'D	Pop Inc.		MTV Hits			Aeon Flux	MTV Hits	Get Spotted	TRL		Advance Warning	Pimp My Ride	MTV Hits	[illegible]
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX Versions	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	MYXILOG	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top 10		Top Of The Pops	Radio MYX	MYX News	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic		Seconds From Disaster		Is It Real?		Air Crash Investigation		Top 5		Wow!		About Asia		Microkillers Week		Seconds From Disaster		Is It Real?	
NBN		Value Vision		Value Vision		Teledyaryo	[illegible]	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo				Pilipinas Ngayon Na!		Bantay OCW w/ Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Chinese New Year Animal Stunt		All That	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	Drake & Josh	The Fairly Odd Parents	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	ChalkZone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	The Brothers Garcia
PBO			Ikaw Lamang				[illegible]				Ben Delubyo				Nakagapos Na Puso				Scorpio Nights 2
Qtv		Bodyguard	[illegible]	The Prince Of Tennis	[illegible]		Moms		Love At Aegean Sea	Hotelier	All In	Laugh To Laugh Ang Kulit	My Guardian Baby		News On Q	[illegible]		MNT (Music Interactive)	
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	As Told By Ginger	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Real Gilligan's Island		The Cut		Paradise Hotel		Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Treat		
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		SBN Music Video			
Solar Sports		2005 IBF Dutch Men's Doubles		Copenhagen Masters		Swatch FIVB World Tour '05 Men's Finals				Swatch FIVB Women's Finals		Sportsdesk	NBA Jam	NBA Game Spurs @ Jazz			Sportsdesk		NBA Inside Stuff
Sports Plus		ACC Basketball Valparaiso @ Duke				Ray Ban Celebrity Poker Challenge				World Game		Ultimate Fighting Championship				Party Poker.com World Open 2005			
Star Movies	I, Robot				Commando			Dude Where's My Car			Catch That Kid (7:25 PM)			Garfield The Movie			Raising Helen (10:25PM)		
Star World	Becker	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	Angel		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Friends	Charmed (Season 8)		The O.C./2006 63rd Golden Globe Awards		Tru Calling/ North Shore		Friends	Charmed (S8)/ 2006 63rd Golden Globes
Studio 23		Astroboy						Get Backers	Spirits	Wazzup Wazzup	Andromeda		Smallville (8:20 PM)	Point Pleasant (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me

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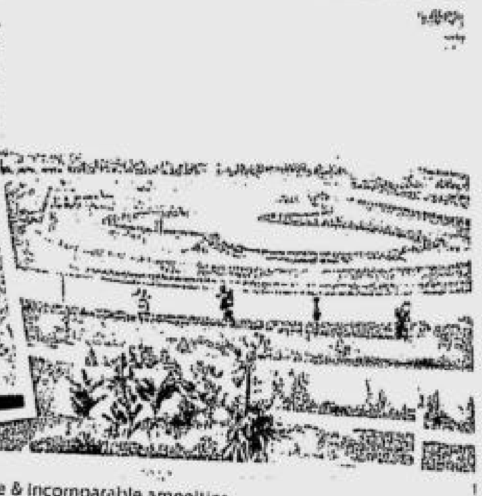
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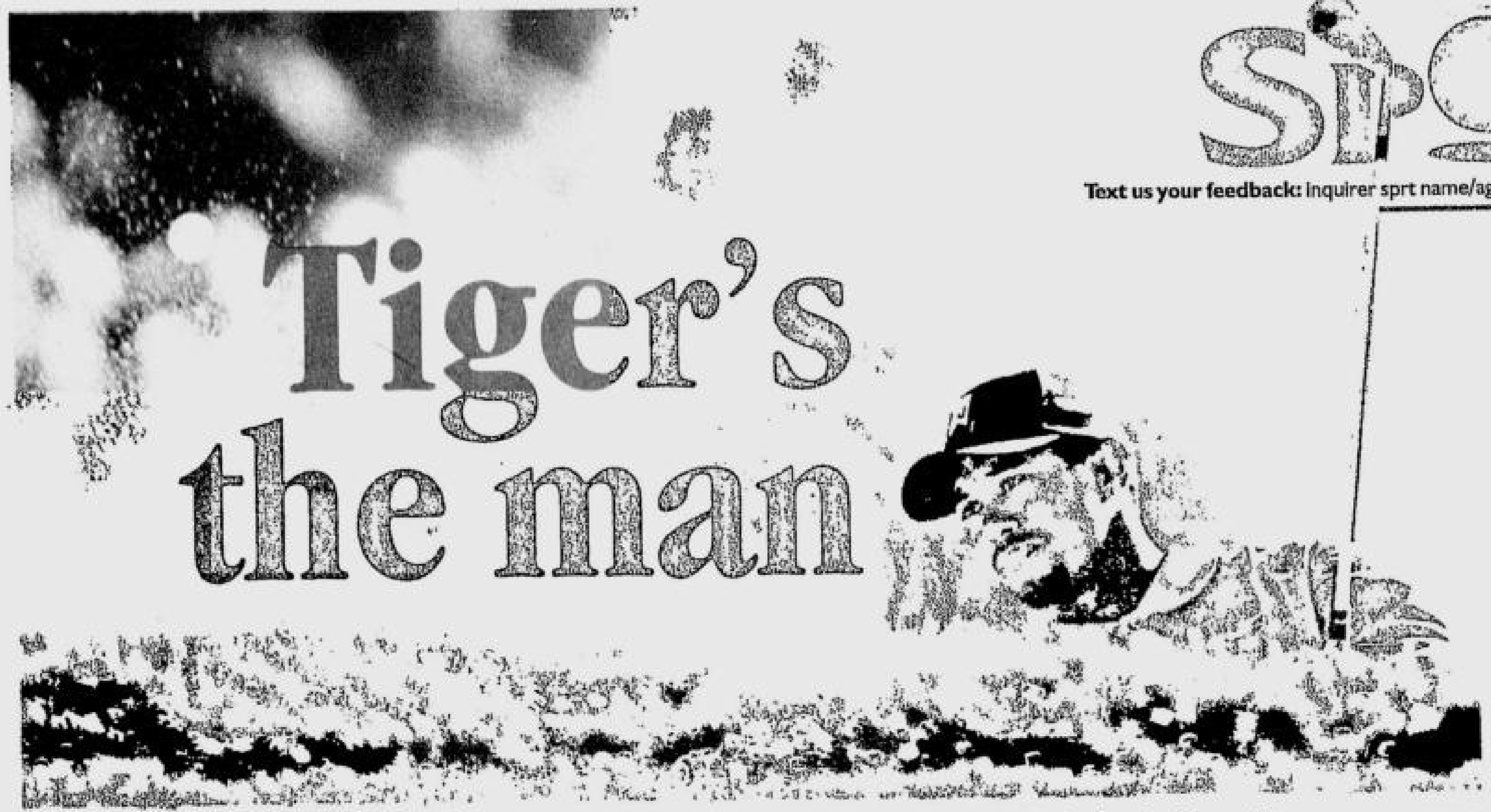

TIGER Woods blasts out of the bunker on the 17th hole Sunday during the final round of the Buick Invitational at Torrey Pines. REUTERS

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Feb 20	JOINT VENTURES FOR REAL ESTATE PROJECTS
Feb 22	TAXATION ASPECTS OF REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS AND PROPERTY ASSESSMENT
Feb 27	REAL ESTATE FINANCE AND INVESTMENT ANALYSIS
Mar 1	MANAGEMENT OF RENTAL PROPERTIES
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World No. 1 nails record 4th Buick title

SAN DIEGO—FRESH FROM AN extended end-of-year break, Tiger Woods won his first tournament of the season at the Buick Invitational on Sunday with a generous dose of good fortune.

The 30-year-old world No. 1 clinched a record fourth title at Torrey Pines when Jose Maria Olazabal missed a three-foot par putt at the second extra hole.

Woods himself had three-putted on three occasions earlier in the day and knew he was fortunate to join a three-way playoff with Olazabal and PGA Tour rookie Nathan Green.

"For me to even have a chance to be in the playoff to win the title, I was very lucky," the 10-time major winner told reporters after struggling with the pace of the greens for most of the day.

The US Masters and British Open champion, who won his first start of a PGA Tour season for the fourth time, failed to build early momentum after going into the final round one stroke behind.

He bogeyed the fourth and also the fifth, where he three-putted from 20 feet after his par-saving attempt horseshoed out of the cup from just two feet.

Although he birdied seven, 12 and 13, further drops at 11 and 14 meant he needed a birdie at the last to make the playoff.

Customary precision

He sized up the eight-footer with customary precision and coolly stroked the ball into the back of the cup.

"It was one of those things where I've had that putt before, and I know that putt doesn't break as much as it looks," Woods said.

At the second extra hole, he could hardly bear to watch after Olazabal gifted him the title with his three-foot miss.

"You don't ever take pleasure out of seeing your friends do that," said Woods, whose previous PGA Tour triumph came four months ago when John Daly missed from similar range at the second extra hole of the WGC-American Express Championship.

"If anything, I would have felt fired up if I made the putt in the playoff for birdie on 18 and ended it right there, but not when a friend of mine misses a short one."

Courtesy of Olazabal's lapse, Woods extended his playoff record to 12 successes out of 13 attempts worldwide.

"You either win or lose right here and now," he said. "It's match play, but you only get one chance. You can't make up any ground. *Reuters*

Manny offers next fight to RP fans

GEN. SANTOS CITY—SO MY COUNTRYmen would be happier.

Boxing hero Manny Pacquiao declared this as the main reason for his desire to hold his next fight in the country during a press conference following his rousing welcome here yesterday.

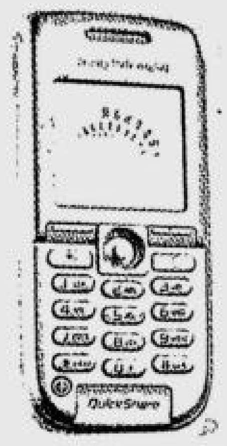
The 27-year-old ring sensation, fresh off his explosive revenge win over Mexican great Erik Morales in Las Vegas last Jan. 21, said he's not afraid to face anybody in the super featherweight division.

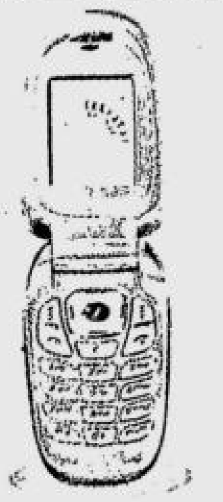
"Line them up," he said. "I will fight them as long as our weights are the same."

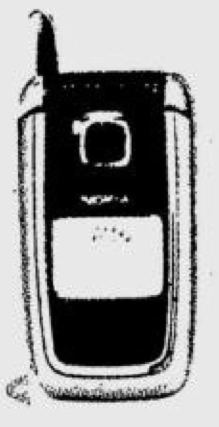
He also taunted reigning WBC super featherweight champion Marco Antonio Barrera. "He's afraid of me," he said. "Now he wants to fight my brother Bobby."

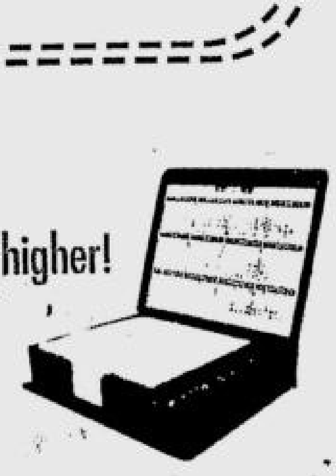
Pacquiao stopped Barrera in a non-title clash in 2003 in Texas.

Pacquiao last fought on local soil in December 2004, when he knocked out Thailand's Fahsan 3K Battery in the fourth round at The Fort in Taguig City. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*









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Talatayod 12-under champion

DHEO TALATAYOD HAS had rumbling beginnings—practicing tennis along the railroad tracks! Talatayod, who bagged the boys' 12-under division title following a 6-4, 6-4 win over Calvin Canlas in the just-concluded 2006 MILO Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop, practices at the Mesalta hardcourt at the PNR España station. "*Ang problema lang po minsan putok pag nasagasaan ang bola namin dahil lumipad sa bakod at meron* train *na dumaan*," explained Talatayod, 11, who shared the limelight with Patricia Orteza in the girls' 12-under and Leyan Moncera in the boys' 18-under class. Due to heavy rains in the final day of the MILO netfest supported by Prince tennis equipment and Adidas with Philta sanction, the organizing CTW Group had declared co-champions Mark Escares and Vince Salas in the unisex 10-under; Leander Lazaro and JL Ferrer in the boys' 14-under; El Santo Santos and Akio Sy in the boys' 16-under; Chynna Mamawal and Sarah Jane Lim in the girls' 14-under; and Zhane Quitara and Christine Patrimonio in the girls' 16-under events.

Roligon puts up 6-cocker

ROLIGON MEGA COCKPIT, boasting a seating capacity of 15,000, celebrates its 16th year today by staging a super 6-cock derby where a staggering prize of P4 million and a brand Toyota Innova are at stake. "With so much at stake, the participants are definitely fielding their best gamebirds so aficionados can expect quality fights from start to finish," said host Roligon Ligon. The first of 127 matches starts at 2 p.m. Entry fee is P11,000 to allow smalltime cockers to participate. Last year, Wewe Burgos of Batangas, Teddy Macadagdag of Cavite and Jeric Junio of Bulacan, ruled the 384-entry Roligon Anniversary Derby. For inquiries, please call 851-2275, 833-1638 and 852-9812.

PCAP derby set Feb. 6

FIERCE COMPETITION is anticipated when the third leg of the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-cock derby series unfolds on Feb. 6 at the Makati Coliseum with B-Meg Derby Ace as sponsor. The combined entry of Jet Fernando, Jingco Brothers, Madlambayan Brothers and Bobby Doro-mal (Jimafer Magic) emerged as solo champion in the second leg last Jan. 23. Meanwhile, another 3-cock derby to be hosted by Capt. Leo Magpantay is slated at Makati Coliseum tomorrow. Entry fee is P4,400. Call 896 -3545 and 895 -6475.

Fastest win Ulutan set

NO LESS THAN 160 ENtries are expected today when the Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan of Antipolo Coliseum sizzles at 8 a.m. Coliseum manager TJ Marquez said registration fee is P700. The guaranteed prize of P150,000 will be distributed to the winners regardless of the number of entries. The fastest win champion will get P40,000 while P3,000 and P2,000 awaits the champion handler and gaffer. Antipolo Coliseum re-opened last Dec. 4 under new management headed by TJ Marquez, who also handles Texas Cockpit.

James keys Cavs' 5th win in row

Block, dunk at crunch time spike 44-point effort

NEW YORK—LEBRON James scored 44 points to inspire the streaking Cleveland Cavaliers to a come-from-behind 113-106 victory over the Phoenix Suns 113-106 at the Quicken Loans Arena on Sunday.

Leading the comeback with 32 points in the second half, James added 11 rebounds and seven assists in a brilliant individual performance that helped the Cavaliers rally from a 60-51 deficit at the intermission to win a fifth straight game.

James also added a stunning block in the fourth quarter that kept the Cavaliers ahead by two points, then followed that play with a slam dunk basket that deflated the Suns.

"That play was the key," James told reporters after the game.

"I just wanted to make a play and take the life out of them a little bit."

Sasha Pavlovic added 15 points for the Cavaliers, while Donyell Marshall added 14 points and seven assists.

Drew Gooden hauled down 10 rebounds for the Cavs, who out-rebounded the Suns 50-31, and won despite allowing the Suns to shoot 51 percent.

Steve Nash led the Suns offense with 24 points and six assists, while Shawn Marion had 22 points and seven rebounds.

James Jones chipped in 20 points for the Suns, who were out-scored 29-19 in the final quarter after carrying a three-point lead into the final 12 minutes.

Cleveland (25-17) had lost six straight games before the current streak, but still trail Detroit by 12 games in the Central Division as the 36-5 Pistons keep winning.

Phoenix (28-16) lost for the first time in three games on their six-game road trip, reducing the Suns's West Division lead over the Los Angeles Clippers to 1 ½ games.

In Houston, Dwyane Wade scored 32 points while Shaquille O'Neal added 24 points and had 14 rebounds to lead the Miami Heat to a 101-95 victory over the Rockets.

Tracy McGrady scored 37 points and had 12 rebounds while Rafer Alston added 26 points for the Rockets.

In Auburn Hills, Rasheed Wallace scored 24 points as the Detroit Pistons beat the Los Angeles Lakers 102-93 for their 11th straight win.

Richard Hamilton added 20 points for the Pistons, now an NBA best 37-5.

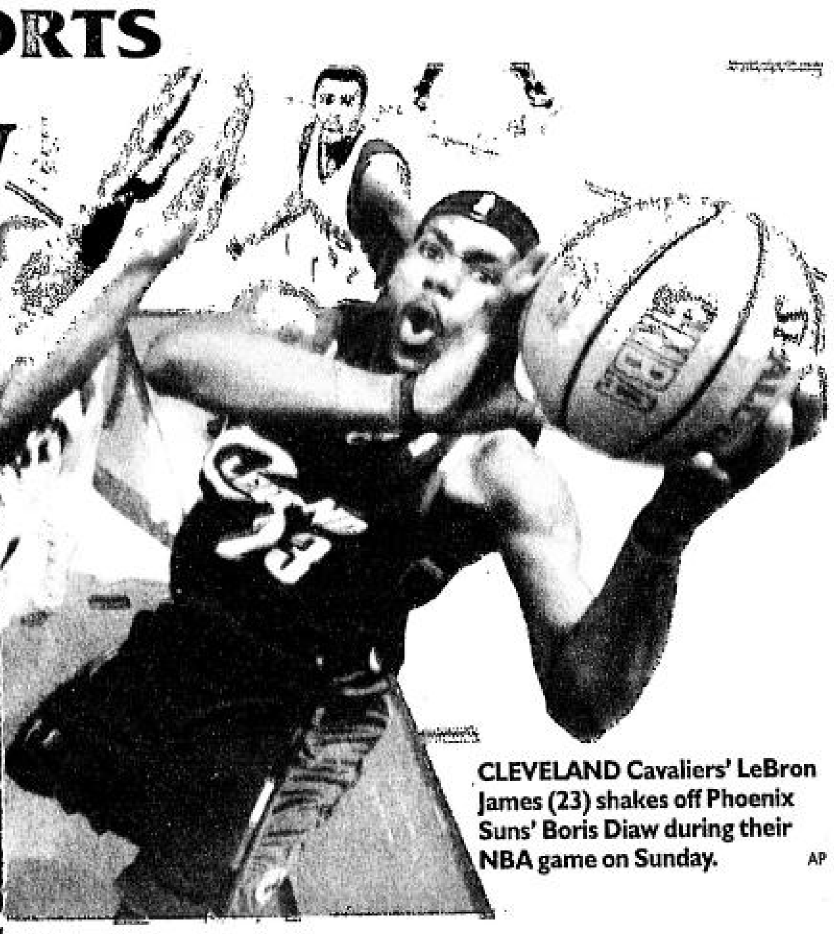
Kobe Bryant scored 39 points and Chris Mihm added 16 points and had 14 rebounds for the Lakers.

In other NBA games played Sunday, the Toronto Raptors edged the Sacramento Kings 124-123 in overtime at Toronto, the Philadelphia 76ers edged the Magic 89-81 at Orlando and the Bucks beat the Boston Celtics 83-79 in Milwaukee. *Reuters*

SOLAR Sports will air the San Antonio-Utah game at 10 a.m. with a replay at 9 p.m.

Governme

Cigarette smoking is da



CLEVELAND Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) shakes off Phoenix Suns' Boris Diaw during their NBA game on Sunday. AP

Clijsters eases out Davenport at No.1

MELBOURNE—AUSTRALIAN OPEN SEMI-Finalist Kim Clijsters replaced Lindsay Davenport at the top of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) world rankings on Monday.

Belgian Clijsters returned to the number one position for the first time since 2003, one place above Australian Open champion Amelie Mauresmo with American Davenport slipping to third.

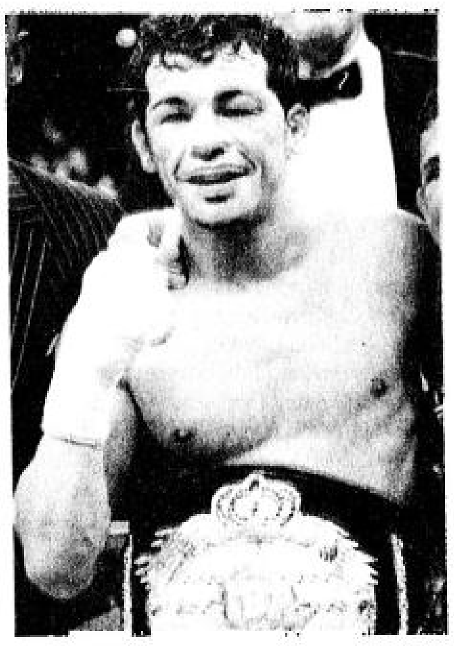
The 26-year-old Frenchwoman rose one spot to second after ending her long wait for a first grand slam title by beating Belgian Justine Henin-Hardenne in the final.

Henin-Hardenne, who pulled out of the final in the second set due to stomach illness, moved up one place to fifth, while last year's Australian Open champion Serena Williams dropped 24 places to 39th after losing in the third round in Melbourne.

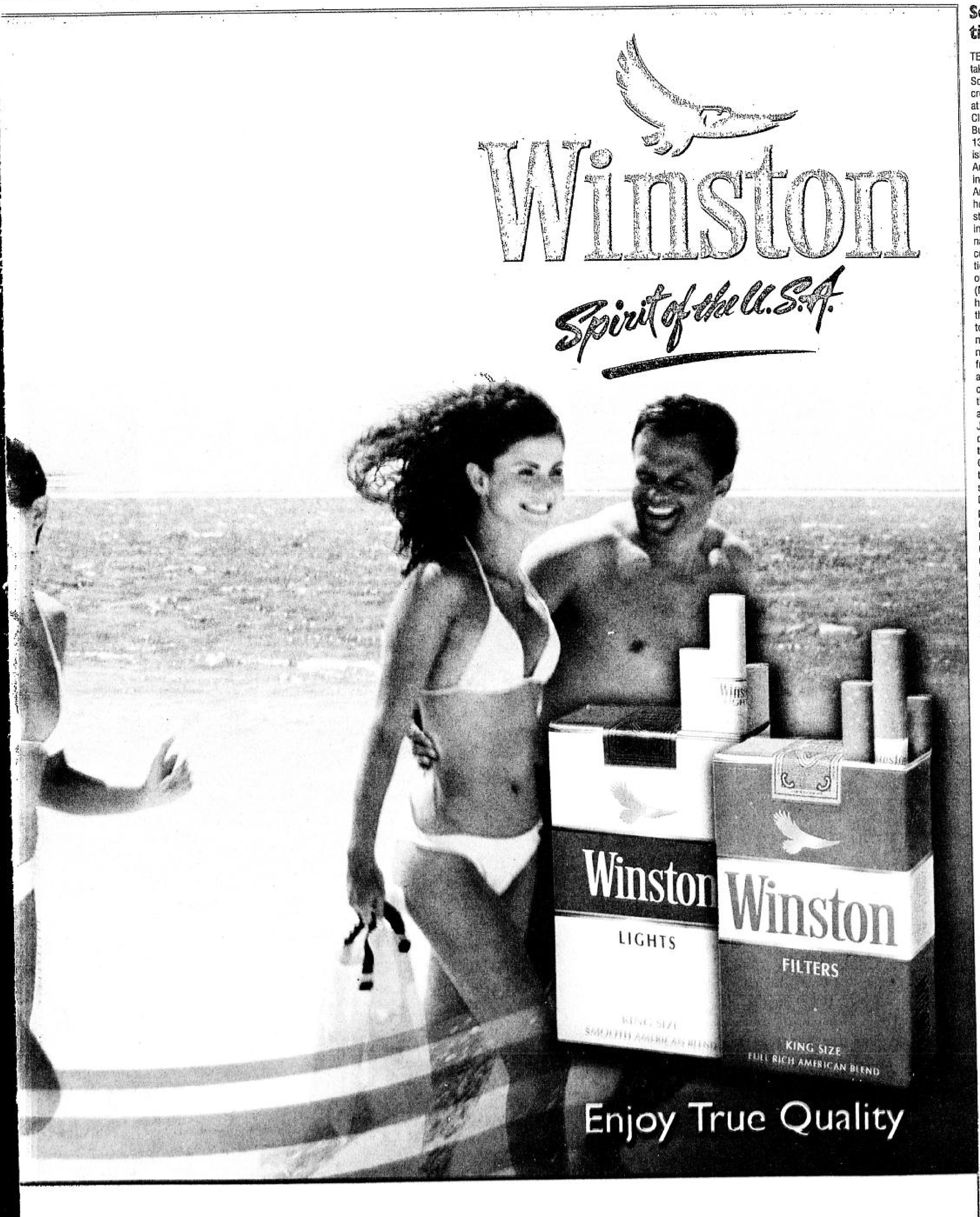
Former world number one Martina Hingis of Switzerland climbed 232 places to number 117 after reaching the quarter-finals in her first grand slam event since retiring though injury in 2002. *Reuters*

Baghdatis hailed as hero

NICOSIA—CYPRUS HAILED MARCOS BAGHDATIS AS a national hero on Sunday even though his odyssey down under ended in defeat. "He is still a winner for Cyprus. We all love him," said Michalis Petrou, 34. "This is still a great day for Cyprus." The exploits of Baghdatis, from a village named 'fairy-tale,' had seized the imagination of tennis fans worldwide as he roared into the Australian Open final in Melbourne. World number one Roger Federer eventually proved too good for the unseeded Baghdatis in Sunday's final but his defeat did nothing to dampen Cypriot pride. *Reuters*



CHAMP: Arturo Gatti of Jersey City, N.J., celebrates his win over Thomas Damgaard of Denmark in their IBA welterweight championship fight at Atlantic City Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, N.J. AP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Southern golf tilt for ladies

TEENER MIA PICCIO takes a crack at the Southern Ladies Open crown beginning Feb. 2 at the Del Monte Golf Club in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon. Piccio, the 13-year-old who finished runner-up to Fil-Aussie Frances Bondad in last year's Philippine Amateurs in Bacolod, hopes to come out strong in the 43rd staging of this annual tournament organized and conducted by the National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP. But she will have her hands full against the likes of Lora Roberto, Carmelette Villaroman and fellow Bacolod native Anya Tanpinco, all from Southwoods, who are expected to head the chase for the crown in the absence of Bondad and fancied players Jayvie Agojo and Debbie de Villa. Another player to watch is jungolfer Crystal Superal. The three-day event is sponsored by Petron Corp., DHL Worldwide Express/WWW Express, Gopez Corp. and Hans Bruhmann Int'l. Jeweler. Contact NGAP at 525-6987 or 524-5160 or email at ngapgolf@hotmail.com or visit www.ngap.net, or Del Monte Golf Club at telefax (088) 855-5976/6101.

Inner Wheel bowlfest on

THE INNER WHEEL Clubs of the Phils. Inc. (IWCP) will hold its 9th Inter-District Bowling Tournament today at the Rockwell Center in Makati City starting at 9 a.m., according to tournament director and past district chair Baby Santos. Assisting Santos are past president Sol Vasquez and Vangie Banzon. Inner Wheel, composed of wives of Rotarians, is holding the event to drum up their forthcoming 40th National Conference set at the Manila Hotel on Feb. 3, and 4. National Conference chair and 2nd National vice president Vicky Magadia along with National president Raquel Sta. Ines expect more than a thousand participants. International champion bowler Liza del Rosario will roll the ceremonial ball with president Sta. Ines and National Conference chair Magadia.

Edmistone rips record

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA—Australia's Jade Edmistone broke her own world record in the 50-meter breaststroke Monday, finishing in 30.31 seconds in the heats on the opening day of the Australian championships. Edmistone shaved 0.14 seconds off the record she set in winning the world championships in Montreal last year. *AP*

Cash-strapped PSC lays down new policies

By Musong R. Castillo

THE NATIONAL SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS WERE briefed yesterday about new policies of the Philippine Sports Commission in the face of the agency's slashed budget and the country's preparations for the Asian Games in December.

Foremost in the agenda during the meeting between PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez and the NSA heads and their representatives was the liquidation of cash advances made for the training of athletes for the recent Southeast Asian Games.

The deadline for liquidation is set today.

Ramirez confirmed that some NSAs are having difficulty completing the requirements, having "inherited" the advances from past leaderships.

In this case, the PSC head said subsequent advances will now be "guaranteed by the (NSA) president and its secretary general who shall be [jointly held] liable for any unliquidated financial assistance" in the future.

Rates for the allowances and food subsidies of RP athletes and those in the training pool have also been released, and coaches will now be required to submit profiles for the PSC's evaluation.

The PSC also said that many coaches will soon be dropped from its payroll.

Those who won SEAG gold medals last month will be entitled to P8,000 monthly allowance and P350 daily food subsidy if the athlete is quartered in any of the government's sports facilities.

Athletes who are not quartered in either the Ultra or the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex will be given a P100 daily food subsidy.

Silver and bronze medalists will be given P4,000 a month, plus the same perks for food.

Taekwondo jins kick off sked with Petron-CPJ tilt

THE PHILIPPINE TAEKWONDO Association kicks off its schedule of tournaments with the Petron Carlos Palanca Jr. championships on Feb. 5 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

PTA president Robert N. Aventajado said the tourney will determine the RP team members for 2006.

The winners will undergo rigorous training for participation in the several international championships, including the Asian Games in Qatar.

Organizing committee chair Sung Chon Hong expects about 500 jins from schools and chapters nationwide, including the Armed Forces, to vie for honors.

Competition in the event supported by Petron, the PSC, Milo and Accel will be held in eight divisions.

PSC, health officials meet on EO 441

By Marc Anthony Reyes

OFFICIALS OF THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMmission and the Department of Health will meet today to discuss the salient aspects of Executive Order 441 which delegates major functions of the sports agency to the DOH.

"We hope to finally resolve the issues because the PSC can't just relinquish its policy-making chores to the DOH," said PSC executive director Guillermo Iroy. "Instead of promotion (for helping win the overall title in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games), it's as if we have been demoted."

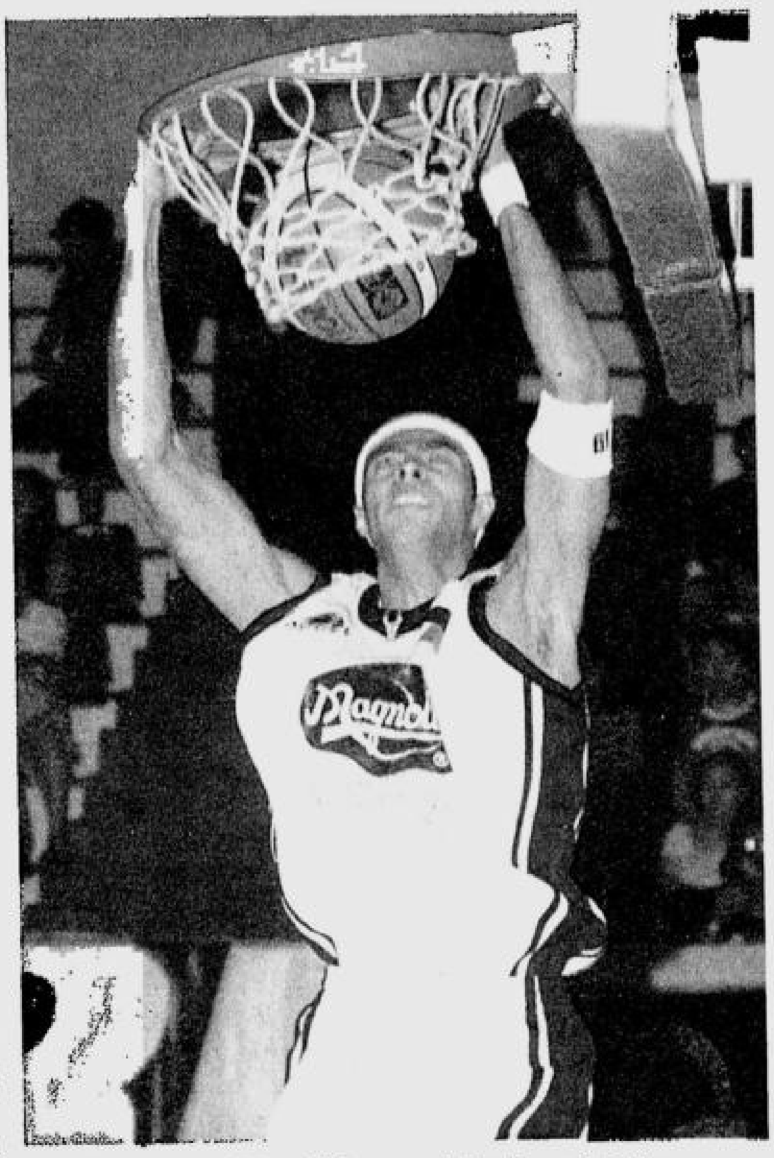
Though EO 441 only gives the health department full power over the health and fitness of the national athletes—one of the major tasks of the PSC—Iroy explained that there is a danger the EO will put the PSC entirely under the DOH.

Iroy noted that the DOH has already created a monitoring group made up of DOH regional directors which will review the PSC policies.

He said the DOH should concentrate its "oversight committee powers" on the more than 1,000 national athletes and nothing more.

He added that the DOH has been communicating with them about its initial moves in line with the implementation of the EO that was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last July 27.

The EO has already caused an uproar from the national sports associations, which relies on the PSC for funds to support their programs.



ARWIND Santos of Magnolia jams one in for Magnolia in the semifinals against Granny Goose. RUDY ESPERAS

PBL Heroes Cup clash too tough to call

By Jasmine W. Payo

HOW DO YOU STOP A TEAM STACKED WITH talent?

That's the dilemma both Rain or Shine and Magnolia Ice Cream will face when they dispute the PBL Heroes Cup crown on Thursday.

Both squads boast four players solidly in the hunt for the Most Valuable Player award.

Jojo Tangkay, the MVP frontrunner with a league-best (16.45 ppg), has been making things happen for the Elasto Painters, along with block-shot leader Jay-R Reyes (2.1 bpg).

Arwind Santos and Kelly Williams, meanwhile, have been piling up double-double performances for the Wizards.

Yet the threat doesn't stop with the teams' star duos. The Painters and the Wizards are also banking on experience and depth on all fronts.

While the Painters have veterans Eugene Tan, Gilbert Malabanan and Marvin Ortiguerra to provide consistent plays, the Wizards too have Kim Valenzuela and Jeff Chan to turn to at crunch time.

Moreover, there's no lack of young guns ready to step up for the two finalists.

When an injury sidelined Tangkay in the Painters' last semifinal match versus Granny Goose, the Painters' collegiate standouts provided the numbers through Junjun Cabatu of La Salle, Ronjay Enrile of Letran, Erwin Sta. Maria of Mapua and Jay Sagad of St. Benilde.

But the Wizards also have the core roster of the Far Eastern U Tamaraws, the 2005 UAAP champions, led by Santos, RJ Rizada and Mark Isip.

Both marched on to the championship round after posting semifinal sweeps.

The Painters slipped past Harbour Centre, 69-67, in Game 1, then wrapped up the series with a 69-59 Game 2 victory.

The Wizards edged Granny Goose in the opener with a 98-97 double overtime triumph, then won, 92-86, in another double-overtime win.

22nd Mango Tee fires off today

MORE THAN 600 ENTRIES WILL COMPETE starting today in the 22nd Mango Tee of the Alabang Country Club.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation and Smart Communications are the co-presentors of one of the most popular member-guest tournaments in the land.

The five-day event, which also boasts of a large number of hole and major sponsors, officially started with the ceremonial tee-off yesterday with former President Fidel V. Ramos as guest.

A sponsors night was also held in the evening which also served as a welcome party for the paricipants.

Mitsubishi Motors and Citimotors Inc. have signed up to provide the tournament's hole-in-one prizes. Aside from the wide array of give-aways and raffle prizes, acemakers have a chance to drive home the latest Mitsubishi vehicles

The major sponsors are Pacsport Philippines, Pacific Sports Network/Taylormade Adidas, Landco Pacific Corporation, Golforce, Inc., Makati Skyline, Philippine Airlines, Srixon Golf and Sharp Philippines.

Que earns ₱715,000 in Qatar golf

QUE: Ties for 37th

DOHA—ANGELO QUE CLOSED OUT WITH A 73 for an even par 288 total that earned him $13,600 in the Commercialbank Qatar Masters won by Sweden's Henrik Stenson by three strokes Sunday.

Que, winner of the Asian Tour's 2004 Vietnam leg, finished in a six-way tie for 37th place after earlier rounds of 71-72-72. He vaulted to 17th in the money list with total earnings of $14,540.

Frankie Miñoza, the only Filipino player in the field, missed the cut with rounds of 74-74. He is 23rd in the money rankings with $8,280.

Stenson overcame swirling winds at the Doha Golf Club to shoot a four-under-par 68 and beat playing partner Paul Broadhurst of England, who signed off with a 70, in the $2 million event co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour and European Tour.

In claiming a third European victory with a 15-under-par 273 aggregate, Stenson laid the ghost of 2005 to rest. Ten months ago, he was pipped at the post by Ernie Els, who finished tied for 13th this time, a massive 10 shots back, after a 72.

Asia's best performer was Thailand's Thammanoon Srirot, who claimed a share of 15th place at 284 after a 73. World No. 2 Vijay Singh wrapped up his week with a 69 for 24th, tied with among others, Asian No. 1 Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand (73), compatriot Thongchai Jaidee (74) and India's Jeev Milkha Singh (73).

Stenson won $333,330. *Asian Tour News.*

Just a thought: What if Pacquiao retires?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

AT 30 YEARS OLD, TIGER WOODS has won 47 PGA titles already.

You know Tiger Woods, right?

If you don't, you might as well don't know Manny Pacquiao, either.

Anyway, Tiger Woods is the world's No. 1 golfer today. Just yesterday, he won the Buick Open—his fourth Buick crown since 2001.

This guy, he seems to win the big ones most of the time, if not all of the time.

Since he turned pro in 1996, all Tiger Woods seems to love doing is win golf tournaments. Not a bad habit. You play and have fun, yet you take home money big enough to make the list of the wealthiest in Forbes Magazine.

Easily yesterday, Tiger Woods pocketed close to a million dollars.

He made a two-putt birdie on the finishing par-5 hole to forge a playoff with Jose Maria Olazabal and Nathan Green.

Next he did par-par on 18 and 16 in the sudden death to win, seemingly, with nary a sweat.

Green lost because he bogeyed 18 after a missed green.

Olazabal lost because he bogeyed the par 3, 16th—also after a missed green.

Tiger Woods was in regulation both times.

To others, they win some, they lose some. To Tiger Woods, he wins mostly all the time.

But while Tiger Woods stashed away the top prize, Olazabal's share of the runner-up purse wasn't as bad since it ran into hundreds of thousands of dollars, too. Same with Green, who made his second Top 5 finish in only two PGA tournaments as a rookie.

Indeed, the beauty of golf is, you are enjoying it and at the same time winning the big bucks.

Not so in boxing.

Manny Pacquiao has to go through Calvary after Calvary to earn his millions.

Although he knocked Erik Morales out in the 10th, Pacquiao would be a hypocrite if he says he wasn't hurt by Morales' own shots to his face.

Sure he was hurt, too, sure he suffered, too, since Morales is also known as one of the hardest punchers in the game. Only 14 of his 48 previous victims went the distance.

If Pacquiao would say otherwise, he'd be lying the way Morales lied when the Mexican said he wasn't hurt the first time they met and won a 12-round decision.

In 46 fights, Pacquiao has had his own dose of hits in his own head. He'd had 22 punch-laden rounds against Morales. Surely, he's had his own share of shots thrown his way.

That's why I pray Pacquiao won't go the way of Muhammad Ali, who also banked quite a fortune as a world heavyweight boxing champion, but would pitifully be reduced into a virtual vegetable after contracting Parkinson's, the disease that mostly afflicts boxers due to constant head bombardment atop the ring—not to include sparring sessions.

Boxers absorb the most head hits than any person on Earth. Doctors say the brain gets shaken with each shot inflicted on the head, face. Parkinson's is that debilitating disease that slows down the motor of our brain. Thus, Ali, 67, now moves in slo-mo, his speech as slurred as one undergoing speech therapy after a stroke.

I don't know if this would be correct but I'll say it just the same: What if Pacquiao retires now?

To begin with, he's got a lot of money now. Look, if the computations are right—he earned no less than P300 million in his Jan. 22 fight against Morales—what is there to fight for?

Give me P4 million and I'll go home to Mangatarem, buy me a hectare of rice field, de-weed my caturays and malunggays in the morning, nurse a cold beer in the gathering shadows while I listen to the birds by the swaying cogon and murmuring brooks.

Ah, but some people would just not stop, couldn't stop, refuse to stop.

Just like grandmasters, only weavers of words know when to resign.

* * *

Comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

RACING Tips

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Spanish Drums (5), Fast and Furious (1), Peri and Pretty (3), Znarf (2)

Race 2—(Penta/Tri)—Richie Rich (9), Special Science (2), Bomb Shell (5), Sir Olizon (10), Puede!!! (1)

Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Vlingget (1), Mister Cool (6), Silver Dollar (2), Shifty (3)

Race 4—(Penta/Tri)—Guided Missile (3), Road Runner (1), Red Phoenix/All Class (8), Fancy Dancer (7), Loaded (9)

Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Lady Be Gold (4), Gentleman's Lady (7), She's An Angel (8), Meal Ticket (2)

Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Beautiful Mind (2), Tellmenolies (5), Please Don't Stop (1), Crafty Treasure (3)

Race 7—Super 6/Tri)—Virgin Island (3), Strong Jays (4), Terminator (6), Southern Prince (9), Old Reliable (5), Common Goal (8).

Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Golden Brook (5), Play It Again (1), Special Lad/La Española (3), Valiant Queen (6).

Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Saint Bernard (11), Once And For All (3), Shutler (4), Scarlet Beauty (5), Western Dancer (8), Magical Surf (1)

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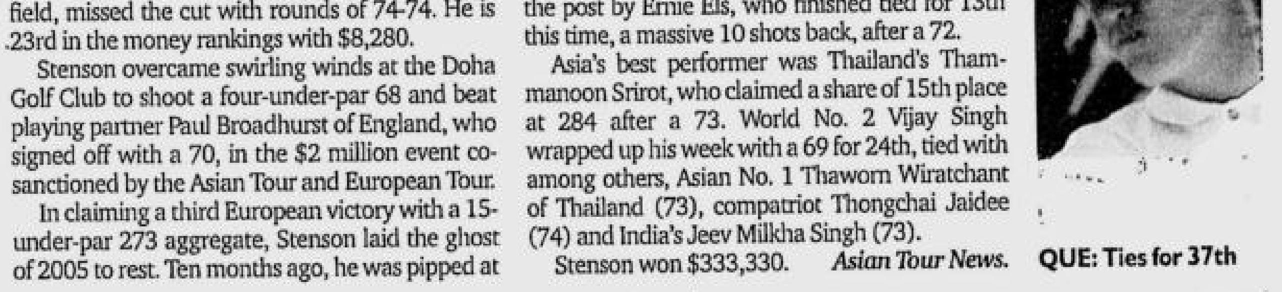

WALTER Pazon (in red Honda hatchback, left) rallies to beat Sheldon Chua to snatch the Quick 8 title at the BRC.

Blanche bets rule 3rd leg of drag racing

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—WALTER PAZON and Leo Joel Cordero ruled their respective classes for Blanche Racing recently in the third leg of the 2005 Red Horse-PCSO National Drag Racing Championship Series at the BRC Drag Strip here.

The 27-year-old Pazon clocked 12.289 seconds in his Honda Hatchback to top the Quick 8 division over teammate Sheldon Chua (12.890).

Cordero, in another Honda, won the Pro class with a time of 13.279, also denying Chua the title.

The expected duel between Blanche Racing and Group N-Matonetics did not materialize after Group N top driver Sonny de Torres damaged his clutch.

"We're looking forward to making it third in a row, and we even bought this new clutch worth P30,000," said De Torres, who is also backed by Jack Daniels.

No one, though, surpassed De Torres' record time of 11.912 seconds.

Sixty drivers competed in the event held in cooperation with the Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Red Horse, PCSO, Petron and Sparco and supported by Pilipinas Shell, Denso Spark Plugs, Casino Filipino, GV 99.9 FM and DaBest98.5 FM.

ENTERTAINMENT

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Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

Classics on cable

'Badjao' makes debut on Cinema One

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"IT WAS SHOT IN SUBIC," RECALLED ROSA Rosal, lead actress of the LVN classic, "Badjao." "Director Lamberto Avellana floated vintas and built houses on stilts in Zambales to make it look like Mindanao."

"Badjao" went on to sweep the 1957 Southeast Asia Film Festival held in Tokyo, winning Best Director, Story, Editing and Cinematography.

"How I wish today's filmmakers would make more movies like 'Badjao' and 'Biyaya ng Lupa'

CLASSICS/ A2-2

Christian again visits Indonesia, where he's a star

CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA IS OFF TODAY for a week-long visit to Indonesia, where he is a big star.

Indonesia's largest TV station, RCTI, in cooperation with Warner Music Indonesia, is producing a big TV special starring Christian and top local composer/musical director and conductor Andi Riyanto. Christian will be backed up by a 40-piece orchestra.

This is the first time that a Filipino performer will have his own TV special in said country.

Christian will also conduct a radio promo tour for Prambors radio station and shoot two music videos. Print publications Kompas, Femina, Gadis Nova and Jakarta Post have scheduled interviews with the Filipino singer. He is also scheduled for guestings in several MTV Indonesia shows.

Exceptional H'wood films coming up

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO WATCH MOVIES. topping our list of should-sees is "Proof," starring **Gwyneth Paltrow** as an enigmatic young woman who grew up following in the footsteps of her brilliant but unstable father, a mathematical genius (**Anthony Hopkins**).

On the eve of her 27th birthday, her world turned upside down by the arrival of her estranged sister (**Claire Danes**), and the attentions of her father's former student (**Jake Gyllenhaal**).

"Proof," which is based on **David Auburn**'s award-winning play, makes for compelling viewing because it tells the psychologically complex story of a woman haunted by her father's past and the shadow cast over her own future.

It explores the link between genius and madness, father-daughter relationships, and the nature of truth and family.

A couple of years ago, the play was staged in Manila, with **Lea Salonga** stolidly portraying its female lead character. That was an unsatisfying viewing experience, so we're looking forward to watching **John Madden**'s film when it opens in town next month, to finally appreciate what the provocative psychological drama is *really* about.

For its part, "Walk the Line," the film on the youthful years of **Johnny Cash** and **June Carter**, has acquired greater cache after stars **Joaquin Phoenix** and **Reese Witherspoon** copped top acting honors at the recent Golden Globe awards for their exceptional portrayals.

The story begins in Depression-era Arkansas, moves through Cash's wild tours with rock pioneers like **Elvis Presley** and **Jermy Lee Lewis**, and culminates in his unforgettable 1968 concert at Folsam Prison.

Also eminently viewable is "Syrianna," a political thriller starring **George Clooney** as an embattled CIA agent and **Matt Damon** as a family man caught up in a political conspiracy.

Directed by **Stephen Gaghan** ("Traffic") and inspired by "See No Evil," the book written by CIA operative **Robert Baer**, "Syrianna" has multiple storylines that unfold against the intrigue and corruption of the global oil industry.

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Classics on cable

From page A2-1

MINDANAO in "Badjao," starring Tony Santos Sr. and Rosa Rosal, was actually Subic in Zambales.

which showcased Filipino culture," Rosal told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview last year. "We need to make younger generations aware of our rich and proud heritage."

Hopefully, Rosal will get her wish to reach a wider, more youthful audience when "Badjao" makes its cable premiere on Cinema One, on Feb. 19 at 8 p.m., on the channel's "Sunday Cine Premiere" slot.

"Badjao" is only the third vintage film to debut on the channel, following another Rosal-starrer, "Biyaya ng Lupa," which was premiered last November, and the Charito Solis tearjerker "Malvarosa" this month.

LVN formally turned over 102 of its titles—including other cinematic gems "Anak Dalita," "Kundiman ng Lahi" and "Ibong Adarna"—to Cinema One in November 2005.

Since the LVN collection is now stored in the state-of-the-art ABS-CBN Archives, the network will have "cable and online rights" to these classics for the next 25 years.

Echoing Rosal's sentiments, Cinema One also expressed the hope that the cable airing of "Badjao" would "attract mature viewers and reintroduce the film to a younger demographic."

Also starring in "Badjao" are acting luminaries Tony Santos Sr., Vic Silayan, Leroy Salvador and Joseph de Cordova.

Rosal couldn't help waxing nostalgic every time "Badjao" was mentioned. "My producer Manny de Leon didn't want to give me the role because it was unglamorous," she recounted.

The fair-skinned Filipino-Egyptian-French *mestiza* wasn't right for the part, the producer explained.

"So I put on dark makeup to look convincing as a Tausug," Rosal said.

Moreover, she had a child birth scene in the movie.

"Even if I was still single then," she added, laughing. "*Dalagang dalaga ako noon!*"

ROUNDUP

Oscar announcements

LOS ANGELES—Academy Award-winning US actress Mira Sorvino will help announce the nominees for the 2006 Oscars tomorrow (Manila time).

SORVINO

The 38-year-old star, who won her statuette for her supporting role in Woody Allen's 1995 film "Mighty Aphrodite," will join Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences President Sid Ganis at the unveiling.

The pair will read out the names of the nominees in 10 of the 24 Oscar categories, which will be broadcast across the globe. The other categories will be unveiled on paper immediately after the ceremony.

The gay cowboy drama "Brokeback Mountain" is seen as the firm favorite in this year's Oscar race after it dominated nominations and prizes in other key Hollywood awards shows.

AFP

Angelina 'ashamed'

DAVOS, SWITZERLAND—Hollywood actress and campaigner Angelina Jolie said Friday she was "ashamed" that the United States still had not signed a UN charter on protecting children's rights.

JOLIE

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Jolie—a UN goodwill ambassador—said a lot of things about her country had shocked her over the past few years.

"I am absolutely ashamed Washington has not formally ratified the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child," she said. "Being an American I think it's horrible. I think Congress should ratify that. If we really care about that how dare we not ratify it?"

The United States signed the convention in 1995, but apart from Somalia, is the only country not yet to have ratified the treaty.

AFP

Phoenix unhurt

LOS ANGELES—Actor Joaquin Phoenix, who stars in the Oscar-hopeful movie "Walk the Line," escaped unhurt from a dramatic accident in which his car overturned and collided with another vehicle, police said.

PHOENIX

The 31-year-old, who won the Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Musical for his role as Johnny Cash in "Walk the Line," told officers the crash on Thursday occurred when his brakes failed on a winding road in the Hollywood hills.

Phoenix and the other motorist, who also was unhurt, exchanged insurance information before leaving the scene of the crash, said Officer Kristi Sandoval of the Los Angeles Police Department.

AFP

Robin as Roosevelt

LOS ANGELES—Oscar-winning US actor Robin Williams has signed on to play former US President Theodore Roosevelt in a new comedy along with "Meet the Fockers" star Ben Stiller, the industry media said Friday.

WILLIAMS

"Night at the Museum" will focus on a night watchman at a New York natural history museum, played by Stiller, who discovers that an exhibit featuring the late US leader comes alive after dark, the Hollywood Reporter said.

Veteran Hollywood star Mickey Rooney and "Mary Poppins" actor Dick Van Dyke will also join Williams and Stiller in the cast of the 20th Century Fox film that will begin shooting next month in Canada.

The movie will be directed by Shawn Levy.

AFP

Diether on time

ACTOR Diether Ocampo led the recent launch of Pizza Hut's new promo, "Hot and On-Time Guaranteed or Your Next Pizza is Free." The launch kicked off with a motorcade in Rizal Park, which Diether joined, along with 2004 Bb. Pilipinas winners Carla Balingit, left, and Mafae Unon.

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3 (DOLBY) CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 GP
4 (DOLBY) HALF LIGHT PG13
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) SOONG SISTERS / NARNIA GP

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2 (SDDS) KING KONG
3 (DTS) RUMOR HAS IT
4 GOLD (DDS) ZATHURA
5 GOLD THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
6 GOLD (SDDS) ZATHURA
7 GOLD (DOLBY) CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2
8 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
9 HALF LIGHT
10 THE MAID

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
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tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) UNDERWORLD 2
2 (DOLBY) CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
3 (DOLBY) ZATHURA
4 (DOLBY) HALF LIGHT

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4 RUMORS HAS IT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
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2 (DOLBY) ZATHURA
3 (DTS) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 RUMOR HAS IT

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
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2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DOLBY) KUTOB

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 FAMILY STONE
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DOLBY) JARHEAD
4 (DTS) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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2 KUTOB
3 (DOLBY) DON'T GIVE UP ON US

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(Gapan)
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
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2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2
3 THE MAID
4 UNDERWORLD-2

Blue Wave MARI UNION
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3 (DOLBY) CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2
4 (DOLBY) UNDERWORLD-2

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2 ZATHURA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 THE MAID
5 UNANG TIKIM

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ZATHURA
5 UNDERWORLD-2

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3 ZATHURA
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2 ZATHURA
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2 BLUE MOON
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4 (DTS) JUST LIKE HEAVEN

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 KUTOB
3 (DOLBY) THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 DOMINO D/W TRUTH ABOUT LOVE

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 KUTOB
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 IN HER SHOES

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
DON'T GIVE UP ON US
THE DESCENT
LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO
MASAHISTA

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 BLUE MOON
2 LOLIPOP

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) ST. ANGIE
2 MASARAP ANG BAWAL
3 UNANG TIKIM
4 (DTS) BLOODFIST

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
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2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 (DTS) ZATHURA
4 UNANG TIKIM
5 TERRORIST HUNTER

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
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2 ZATHURA
3 JARHEAD
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2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 GP
3 ZATHURA 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 GP
4 HALF LIGHT 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 PG-13

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UNDERWORLD 2: EVOLUTION R13 1:25,3:40,5:55, 8:10,10:20
CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 GP 1:40,3:50,6:00, 8:10,10:15
RUMOR HAS IT PG13 12:50,3:05,5:20, 7:35,9:50
ZATHURA GP 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:20
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1 ZATHURA MTRCB GP 12 00, 2.30, 5.00, 7:30, 10.00 LMF
2 UNDERWORLD 2 MTRCB: R-13 12 00, 5 00, 10 00
FUN WITH DICK & JANE MTRCB PG-13 2 30 7 30
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 MTRCB GP 12 00, 2 30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
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Singers' secrets

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I don't believe the rumors about Pops and her mother

I REMEMBER ENJOYING THE GIGS OF M.Y.M.P. (Makė Your Momma Proud) at Aruba, when they were still newcomers.

Now, the acoustic duo (**Juris Fernandez** and **Chin Alcantara**) has joined the big league and is set to reconquer Araneta Coliseum on Feb. 3 with "MYMP... Best (The Repeat)."

Don't they feel pressured, since they once filled up the Big Dome?

Chin shrugs and says, "We love what we do. It doesn't matter how many people are in the venue. We always give our all."

Their covers usually sound better than the originals, but what songs can't they sing?

Juris admits that, since she's no belter, she avoids showstoppers. "For instance," she says, "'I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing.' And, no offense to Abba fans, I will never sing 'Chiquitita.'"

What's their tip to aspiring bands? **Chin** says: "Don't sing for money or fame. You'll end up disappointed. Just enjoy what you're doing."

An intriguing segment in their forthcoming concert is a **Madonna** medley, complete with choreography.

I hear that **Kris Aquino** has grown so fond of the duo's music, she reportedly commissioned a couturier to make a gown for **Juris** for the concert.

M.Y.M.P. will embark on a six-city US tour next month.

Megastar **Sharon Cuneta** would have shed mega-inches by the time her "My Mega Valentine" concert goes onstage at the Araneta on Feb. 12. On top of her strict diet, **Sha** reportedly underwent "medical procedures." She'd rather not divulge the details, though.

I don't believe rumors that **Pops Fernandez** had a falling out with mom **Dulce Lucban**. She supposedly dropped her mom as manager and is now being handled by **Arnold Vegafria**.

I know **Pops** and her mom quite well. Money will never be an issue between them. As **Pipay** once told me: "*Sa amin ni* Mommy and her DSL Productions, *walang kuwentahan*."

I also recall what Tita **Dulce** once told me, "I've stopped waiting for romance. I'm devoting my life to my children."

As a mom/manager myself (to IC), I've learned that sometimes the best way to manage your kids is not to manage them at all.

Bravo Jed!

Jed Madela received several standing ovations during his packed concert at Music Museum last Friday. When he sang "Hanggang," his eyes were fixed on **Rachelle Ann Go**.

After the show, she went backstage to congratulate **Jed**. He wanted to invite her to a midnight snack but she had an early flight to Cebu the next day. **Jed** instead asked his Cebu-based cousins to deliver a bouquet of flowers to **Rachelle** during one of her mall shows in the province.

What else does **Jed** have to do for **Rachelle Ann** to say "It's a GO?"

Speaking of **Rachelle Ann**, her rumored-suitor, **Christian Bautista**, was reportedly spotted being extra chummy with a foreign-looking guy.

Was the singer just giving the guest a taste of Pinoy hospitality?

While we're on the subject, who is **Vic** in **Mark Bautista**'s life? Despite **Mark**'s hectic schedule, he drops everything whenever **Vic** is in town. Wipe away that malicious grin. **Vic** is a US-based producer and a big fan of **Mark**'s. He started producing concerts after watching one of **Mark**'s shows.

Et cetera

The "Asianovela diva," **Faith Cuneta** will have a pre-Valentine concert, "Jewel in the Metro," on Feb. 2 at Metro Bar. Guests are Pinoy Big Brother housemate **Franzen Fajardo** and reporters **Rey Pumaloy** and **Richard Pinlac**. On V Day, she will have a big one at the Aliw Theater, "In Fairness ... My Valentine Show"—with **Rufa Mae Quinto**, **Randy Santiago** and other surprise guests. Call 891-9999.

"Strategies to succeed need proper implementation." That's the mantra of Scribble Works Inc., a boutique advertising agency that aims to bring "concept TV" to another level. It was behind innovative shows like "Island Flavors," "Tahanang Pinoy," "Men's Room," "Lock & Load" and "Shootfest."

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(E-Mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com)

DID YOU KNOW...

We hear that Judy Ann Santos, Piolo Pascual, Eula Valdez, Edgar Mortiz, Cherrie Pie Picache and Jean Garcia are only some of the actors who spend time in a charming little spa hidden in the hills of Tagaytay City.

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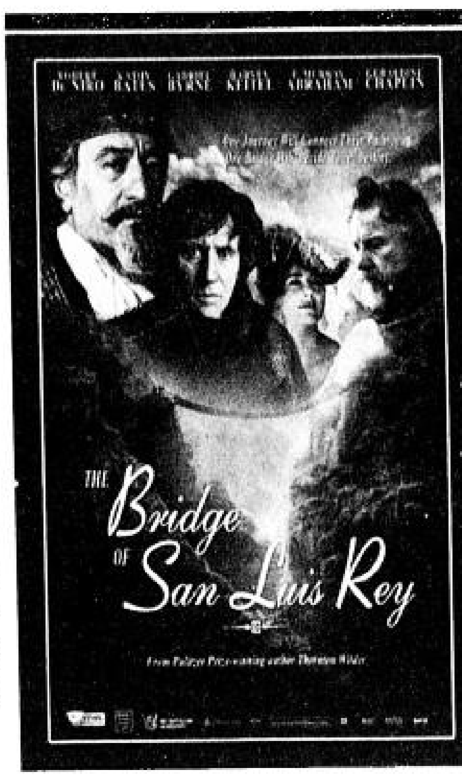
FEB 1 4:40 PUREFOODS vs AIR 21 7:35 GINEBRA vs RED BULL
MYMP... BEST THE REPEAT
FEBRUARY 3, FRIDAY 8 PM



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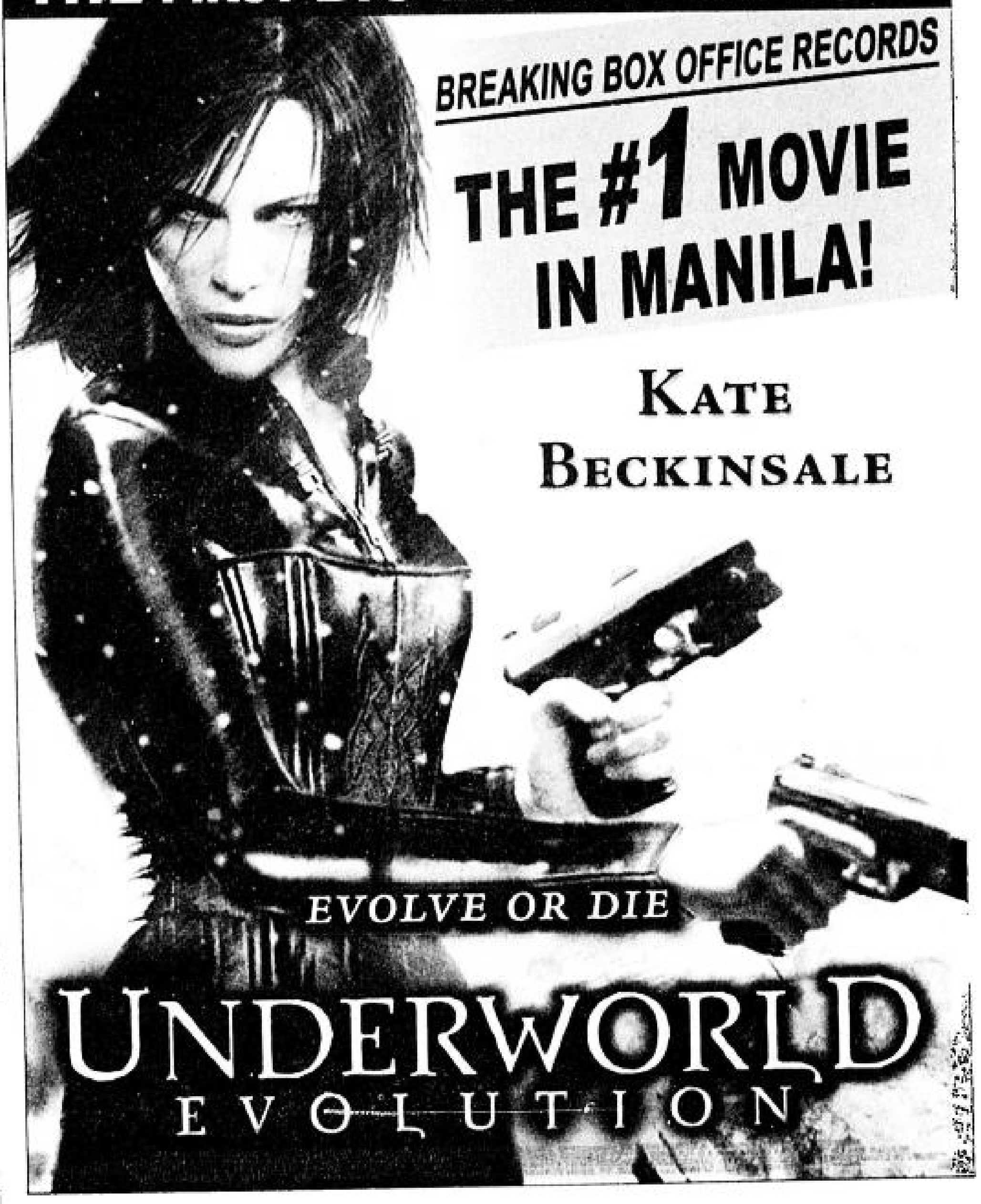

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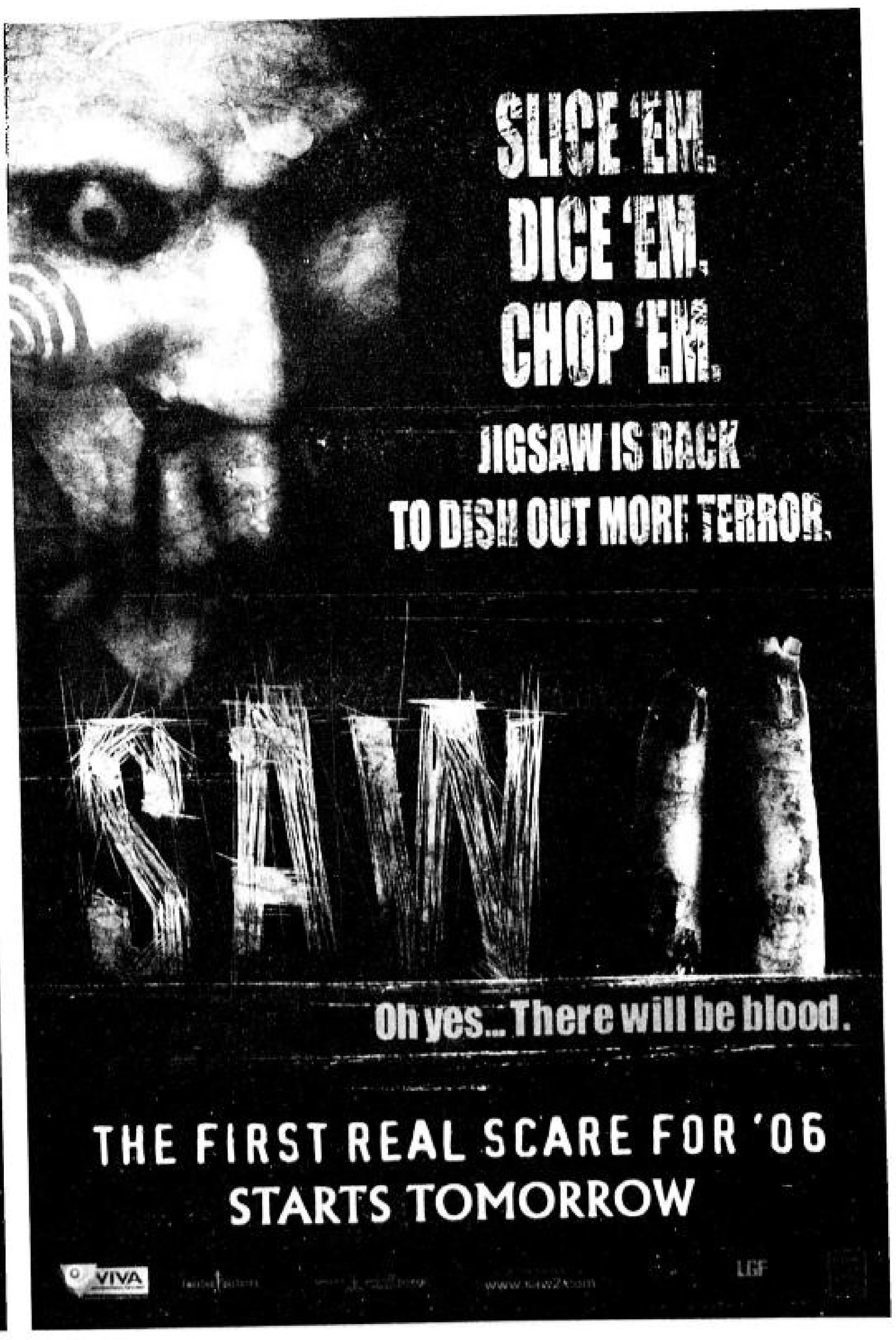

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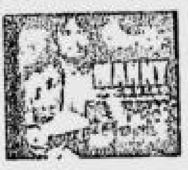
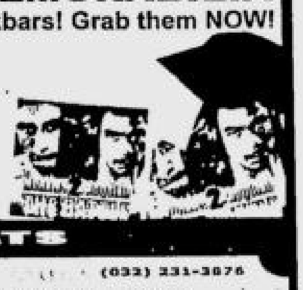


Manny Pacquiao CD P199.00

Pacquiao vs Barrera DVD P199.00

The Battle T-shirt P250.00



QUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 ZATHURA 01:50FS/02:25MF/04:35/06:45 08:25LFS/09:00LMF/10:40END
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 01:40FS/02:10MF/04:25/06:40 08:25LFS/09:00LMF/10:45END
MEGAMALL
1 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE 11:00FS/11:15MF/01:20/03:25/05:30/07:35 09:10LFS/09:40LMF/11:15END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 CHRONICLES OF NARNIA 11:20FS/11:30MF/02:00/04:30/07:00 09:20LFS/09:30LMF/11:50END
2 UNDERWORLD EVOLUTION 11:20FS/11:30MF/01:30/03:30/05:30/07:30 09:15LFS/09:30LMF/11:15END
3 ZATHURA 11:20FS/11:30MF/01:30/03:30/05:30/07:30 09:10LFS/09:30LMF/11:10END
movietime

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
2 BIG TIME
3 KING KONG
4 ZATHURA
5 HALF LIGHT
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
7 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
8 RUMOR HAS IT
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 UNDERWORLD 2
11 THE MAID
12 NARNIA

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
5 ZATHURA
6 RUMOR HAS IT
7 NARNIA
8 BIG TIME
9 HALF LIGHT
10 THE MAID

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
3 ZATHURA
4 UNDERWORLD 2

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 ZATHURA
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 BIG TIME
2 BLUE MOON
3 KING KONG
4 NARNIA
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
6 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
7 UNDERWORLD 2
8 ZATHURA
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 THE MAID
11 RUMOR HAS IT
12 WHO'S YOUR DADDY

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 ZATHURA
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
5 NARNIA
7 HALF LIGHT
8 THE MAID
9 BIG TIME
10 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ZATHURA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 ZATHURA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 BIG TIME
5 NARNIA
6 THE MAID
7 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
8 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE

SM CITY MANILA
1 BIG TIME
2 RUMOR HAS IT
3 NARNIA
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 ZATHURA
6 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
7 LITTLE MANHATTAN
8 WHO'S YOUR DADDY
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 THE MAID
11 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
12 HALF LIGHT

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
1 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
2 ZATHURA
3 UNDERWORLD 2
4 THE MAID
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 ZATHURA
2 NARNIA
3 BIG TIME
4 ST. ANGE
5 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 ZATHURA
2 FAMILY STONE
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 NARNIA

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO
1 NARNIA
2 ZATHURA
3 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BACOOR
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 THE MAID
3 ZATHURA
4 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
7 KING KONG
8 NARNIA

SM CITY MARILAO
1 ZATHURA
2 NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 NARNIA
2 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ZATHURA

SM CITY LUCENA
1 NARNIA
2 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
3 THE FOG
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 ZATHURA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 NARNIA
4 THE FOG

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 NARNIA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 ZATHURA
4 FAMILY STONE
5 BIG TIME
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 THE MAN

SM CITY ILOILO
1 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
2 RESERVED
3 NARNIA
4 ZATHURA
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 RESERVED
8 FAMILY STONE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 ZATHURA
2 THE MAN
3 FAMILY STONE
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
5 BIG TIME
6 NARNIA

SM CITY [illegible] DE ORO
1 NARNIA
2 IN HER SHOES
3 ZATHURA
4 AN UNFINISHED LIFE

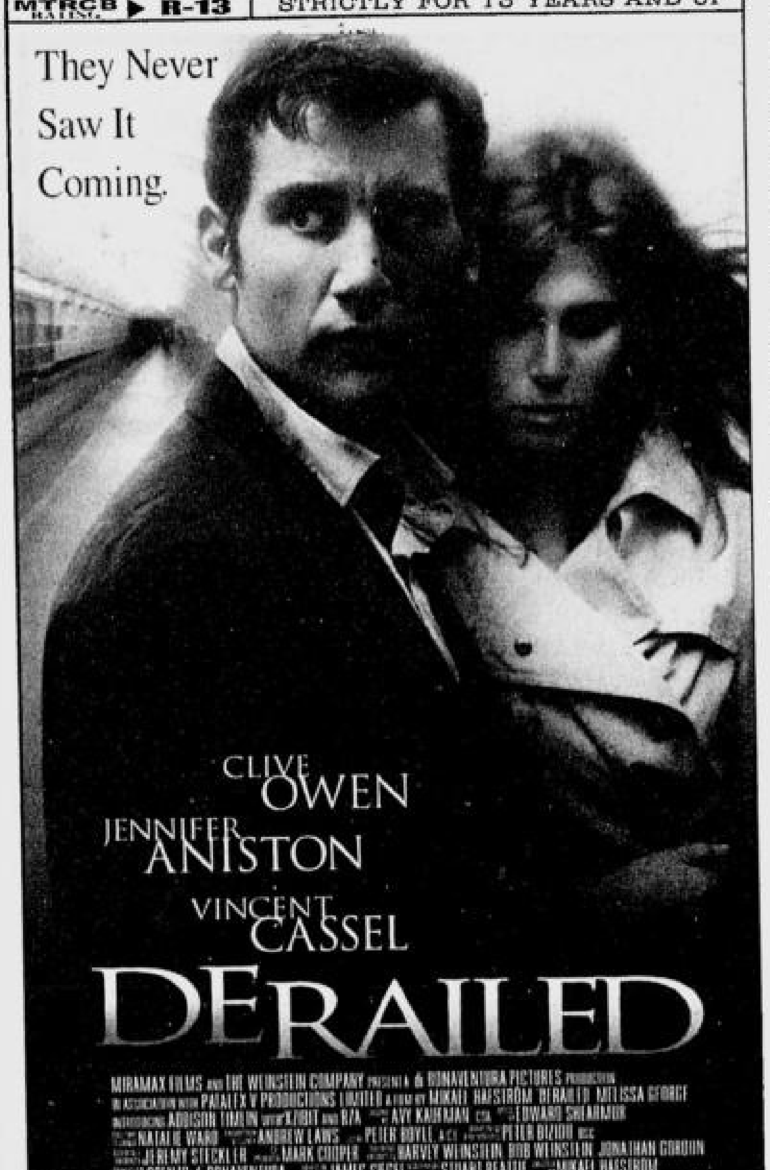
SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING MTRCB RATING SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

MAUNA NA! SPECIAL ADVANCE SHOWINGS TODAY!
REGULAR RUN BEGINS FEB 8
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

Jim Carrey
Téa Leoni
Fun with Dick and Jane

Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

OPENS TOMORROW
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS AND UP



Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

A SPECIAL VALENTINE'S DAY PRESENTATION
OPENS FEB. 8
THE STARS OF "ALEXANDER" & "BATMAN BEGINS"
TOGETHER IN ONE GIANT EPIC FROM ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR TERRENCE MALICK.

Ebert & Roeper of Chicago Sun-Times says:
"The BEST HISTORICAL EPIC ROMANCE since TITANIC!...One of the BEST Movies of the Year!"

"RAPTUROUSLY ROMANTIC and HAUNTING! ...a GENUINE EVENT"
---Peter Travers
Rolling Stones

"A Work of BREATHTAKING IMAGINATION, in every sense a MASTERPIECE!"
---Carina Chocano
L.A. Times

"MAGNIFICENT!"
---Merie Wallace
NEWSWEEK
CHRISTIAN BALE as John Rolfe
Q'ORIANKA KILCHER as Pocahontas
COLIN FARRELL as Capt. John Smith
A War of Worlds.
A Forbidden Love.
A Shared Destiny.
The NEW WORLD

Exceptional H'wood . . .

From page A2-1

"Memoirs of a Geisha" is a sweeping romance directed by **Rob Marshall**, produced by **Steven Spielberg**, and featuring an international cast led by **Zhang Ziyi**, **Michelle Yeoh**, **Ken Watanabe** and **Gong Li**.

The film version of **Arthur Gulden**'s novel begins its story in 1929, near the end of the geisha's golden era in Japan.

Told as a fable about a disappearing world, the film introduces viewers to Sayuri (Zhang). As she enters the geisha's hidden world, she is taught that she is not free to love, or to pursue her own destiny.

Yet Sayuri cannot forget a moment of unexpected kindness she experienced at an early age, and this sustains her for years—until an accidental meeting changes the course of her extremely regimented life, and results in her eventual triumph.

'Once on This Island'

SILANG's production of "Once on This Island" will have a repeat run at the RCBC Theater on Feb. 3, 4 and 5. Call 819-0458 or 891-9999. **Bituin Escalante**, **Jett Pangan**, **Menchu-Lauchengco-Yulo** and **Michael Williams** once more lend their exceptional voices to the timeless love story of Ti Moune (**Raki Vega**) and Daniel (**Gian Magdangal**).

Direction is by **Bert Guingona**, choreography by Denisa Reyes, production design by **Gino Gonzales**, and lights by **John Batalla**.

M.Y.M.P.

AT 8 p.m. on Feb. 3, M.Y.M.P. will restage its successful concert at the Araneta Coliseum, with special guests **Top Suzara**, **Barbie Almalbis**, and band vocalists **Ebe** of Sugarfree, **Ney** of Six-Cycle Mind and Lougee of Mojofly. Call 911-5555.

'Everything Is Illuminated'

AFTER "THE Lord of the Rings," **Elijah Wood** stars in "Everything is Illuminated." He plays a young man who travels to the Ukraine to find the women who saved his grandfather's life during the Holocaust.

The film marks the directorial debut of actor **Liev Schreiber** ("The Manchurian Candidate," "The Sum of All Fears").

Wood shares that he felt a particularly personal connection with his character in his new movie, because he has relatives in Eastern Europe, and he too is in the process of searching for his roots.

That psychic connection prompted him to agree to act in "Illuminated," over the many scripts sent to him for his perusal and approval.

Special treats on Hallmark

SHOULD-SEE programs on the Hallmark Channel include (all shows at 10:35 p.m.): "McLeod's Daughters" on Monday, "Family Law" on Tuesday, "Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye" on Wednesday, "Judging Amy" on Thursday, "Doc Martin" on Friday.

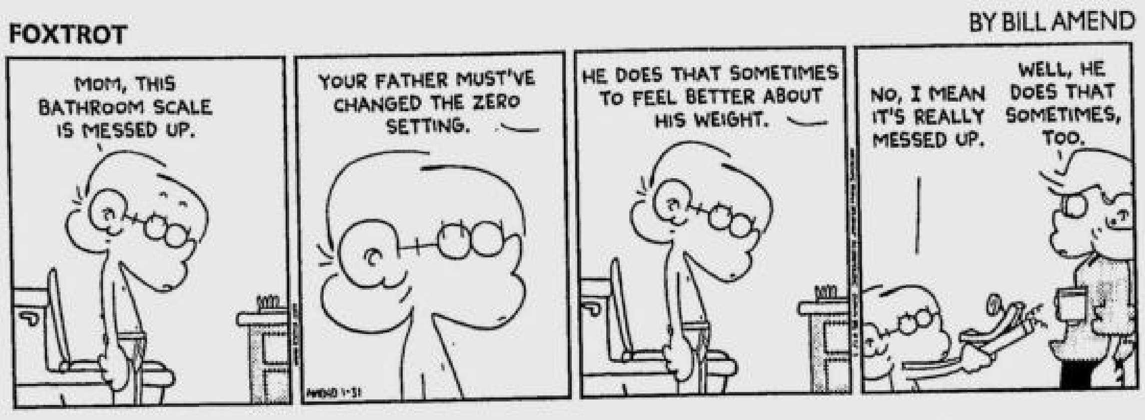
Other popular shows: "The Nanny," M-F at 2 and 6:30 p.m.; "Bewitched," M-F at 2:30 and 6 p.m.; and "Who's the Boss?" M-F at 5:30 p.m.

Last Jan. 22 at 9 p.m., Hallmark premiered "Hercules," a four-hour epic about the legendary Greek deity, starring **Paul Telfer**, **Eliozabeth Perkins**, **Timothy Dalton** and **LeeleeSobieski**.

ComicRelief

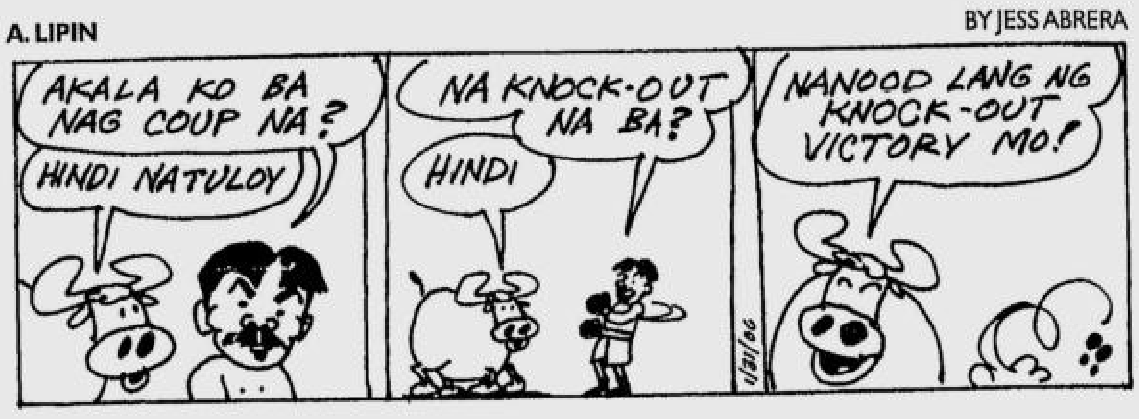
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


MOM, THIS BATHROOM SCALE IS MESSED UP.
YOUR FATHER MUST'VE CHANGED THE ZERO SETTING.
HE DOES THAT SOMETIMES TO FEEL BETTER ABOUT HIS WEIGHT.
NO, I MEAN IT'S REALLY MESSED UP.
WELL, HE DOES THAT SOMETIMES, TOO.
AMEND 1-31

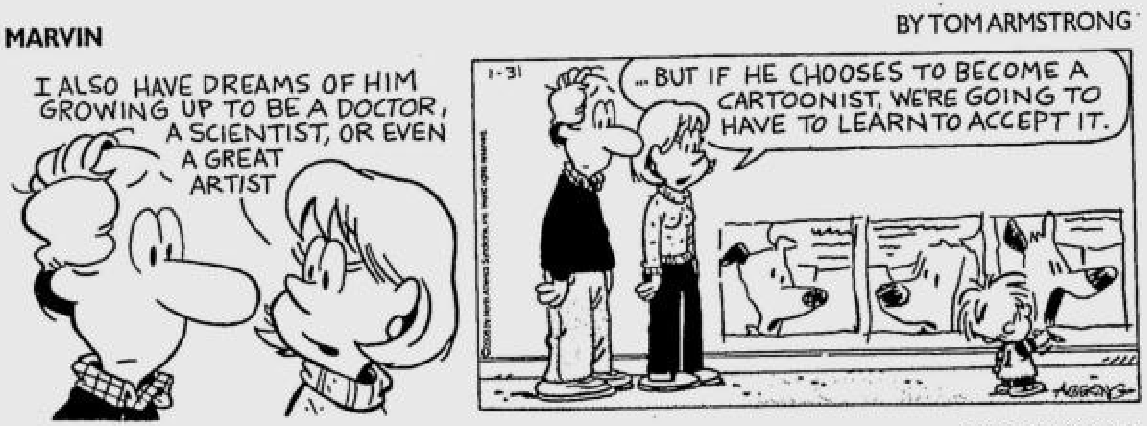
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AKALA KO BA NAG COUP NA?
HINDI NATULOY
NA KNOCK-OUT NA BA?
HINDI
1/31/06
NANOOD LANG NG KNOCK-OUT VICTORY MO!

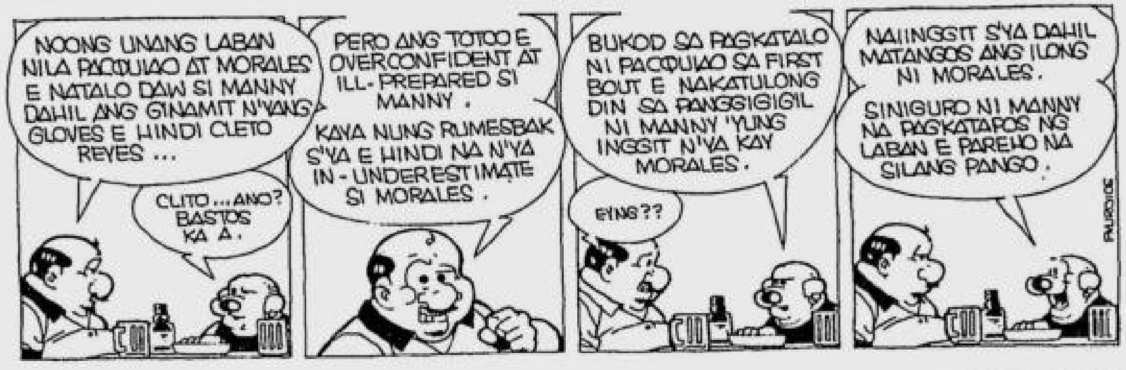
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I ALSO HAVE DREAMS OF HIM GROWING UP TO BE A DOCTOR, A SCIENTIST, OR EVEN A GREAT ARTIST
1-31
...BUT IF HE CHOOSES TO BECOME A CARTOONIST, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LEARN TO ACCEPT IT.
ARMSTRONG

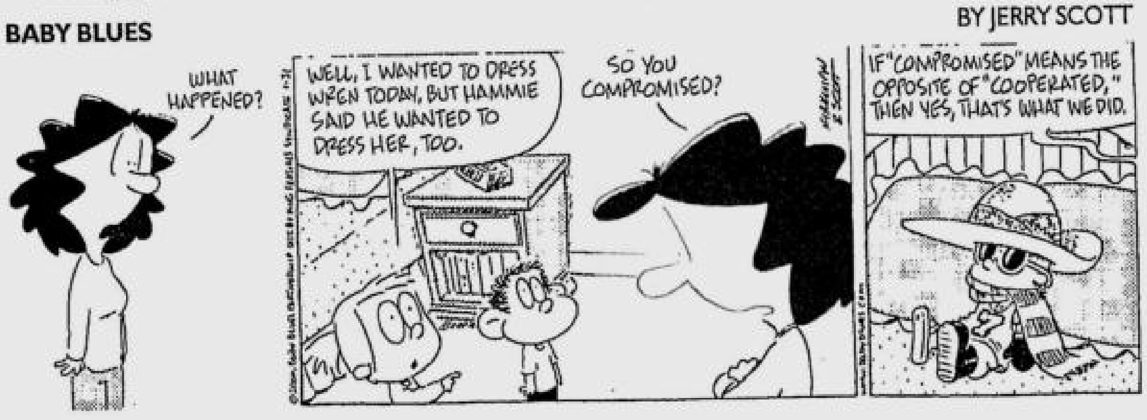
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NOONG UNANG LABAN NILA PACQUIAO AT MORALES E NATALO DAW SI MANNY DAHIL ANG GINAMIT N'YANG GLOVES E HINDI CLETO REYES ...
CLITO ... ANO? BASTOS KA A.
PERO ANG TOTOO E OVERCONFIDENT AT ILL-PREPARED SI MANNY.
KAYA NUNG RUMESBAK S'YA E HINDI NA N'YA IN-UNDERESTIMATE SI MORALES.
BUKOD SA PAGKATALO NI PACQUIAO SA FIRST BOUT E NAKATULONG DIN SA PANGGIGIGIL NI MANNY 'YUNG INGGIT N'YA KAY MORALES.
EYNG??
NAIINGGIT S'YA DAHIL MATANGOS ANG ILONG NI MORALES.
SINIGURO NI MANNY NA PAGKATAPOS NG LABAN E PAREHO NA SILANG PANGO.
PMJUNIOR

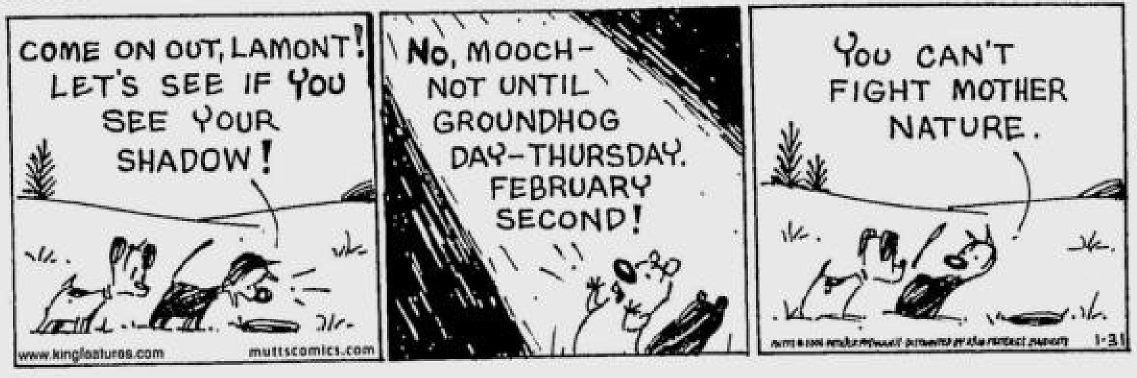
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT HAPPENED?
WELL, I WANTED TO DRESS WREN TODAY, BUT HAMMIE SAID HE WANTED TO DRESS HER, TOO.
SO YOU COMPROMISED?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
IF "COMPROMISED" MEANS THE OPPOSITE OF "COOPERATED," THEN YES, THAT'S WHAT WE DID.

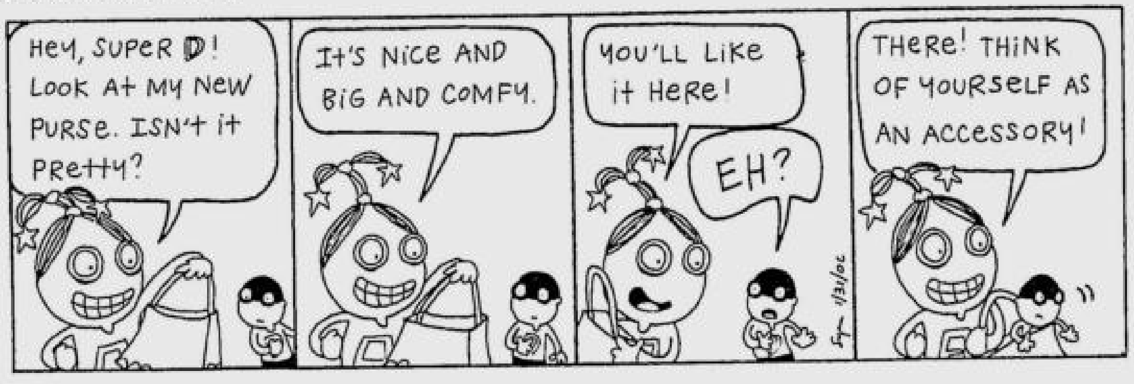
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


COME ON OUT, LAMONT! LET'S SEE IF YOU SEE YOUR SHADOW!
NO, MOOCH- NOT UNTIL GROUNDHOG DAY-THURSDAY, FEBRUARY SECOND!
YOU CAN'T FIGHT MOTHER NATURE.
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
1-31

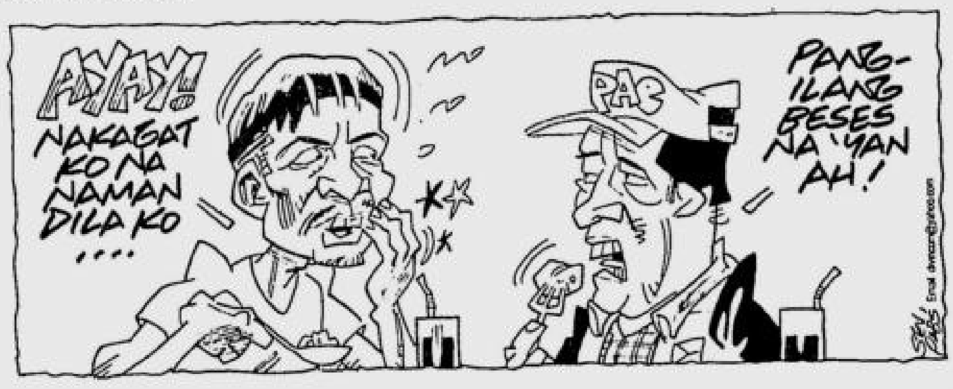
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, SUPER D! LOOK AT MY NEW PURSE. ISN'T IT PRETTY?
IT'S NICE AND BIG AND COMFY.
YOU'LL LIKE IT HERE!
EH?
1/31/06
THERE! THINK OF YOURSELF AS AN ACCESSORY!

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


AYAY!
NAKAGAT KO NA NAMAN DILA KO ....
PAC
PANG-ILANG BESES NA 'YAN AH!

AT PINAG-UUSAPAN PA RIN NG BAYAN SI MANNY PACQUIAO

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You like to perform. You're naturally entertaining, and you feel you have something to communicate. You also enjoy being appreciated. However, you want to make your mark on the world, and you want to be taken seriously. (After all, you're more than just a pretty face.) Work hard in the year ahead because rewards are soon to follow.

Birthdate of: Justin Timberlake, singer; Minnie Driver, actress; Carol Channing, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day to lie low. Steal some quiet moments of solitude for yourself if you can. At best, work alone. (You might be involved in service on behalf of others.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a social day with friends and groups. Conversations with a female friend in particular could be significant or important to you. Could this be a new love?

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a good day to talk to parents, bosses and important people. Be aware that you are noticed more than usual today. Something might occur that calls attention to you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Try to break from your routine today. Do something different. Go someplace you've never been before. You're hungry for adventure; you're also hungry to learn something new.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a good day to take care of details about shared property, debt, taxes and insurance matters. Expect to feel emotionally intense about anything that you're involved with today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): With today's Moon opposite your sign, you are both energized and emotional. Conversations with partners might require more patience, tact and diplomacy.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good day to take care of little nitty-gritty details so that you feel more organized both at work and at home. Tidy up things and reduce the clutter.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're playful. Enjoy flirtatious or pleasant activities with children today. The arts are also appealing. Watch professional sports, or participate if possible.

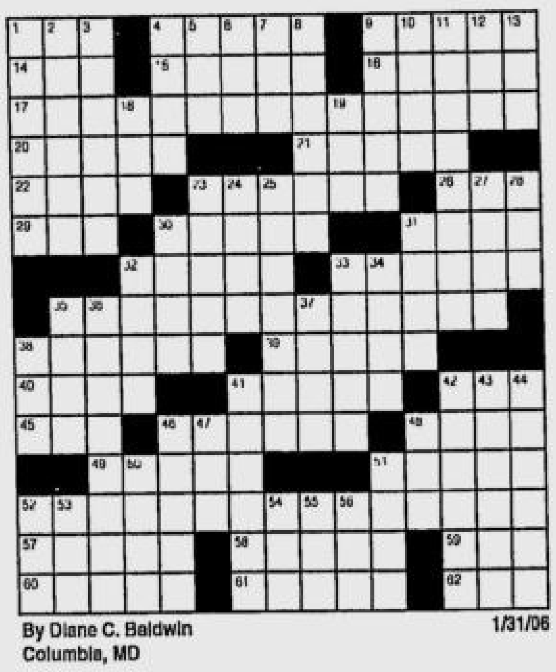
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You can make good headway at home and with domestic activities today. Family discussions might also take place. Dealings with a parent can go well today. Family members feel generous toward each other.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel optimistic about your future. Perhaps a conversation with siblings or relatives encourages you in some way. This is a lovely day to schmooze with others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a good day for business and commerce. It's also a great day for shopping. Whatever you get will either please you or be a good value.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The Moon is in your sign today. Furthermore, it makes lovely aspects to other planets. This is an easygoing, pleasant day for you. Enjoy all contacts with others.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD
1/31/06

ACROSS
1 Actress Hagen
4 Bill addition
9 Play backer
14 Squealer
15 Accustom
16 Beetle Bailey's boss
17 Determined approach
20 Tip off
21 Reserves in advance
22 __ of the above
23 Underlying
26 Valise
29 Time period
30 Love of golf
31 Withered
32 Saying
33 Laudanum, e.g.
35 Pragmatic approach
38 Less fatty
39 Seaside golf course
40 Jug handles
41 Hall-of-Famer Stengel
42 Abe's boy
45 __ Glory
46 Corporate consolidation
48 Manage to deal (with)
49 Woman's wrap
51 Subject matter
52 Haphazard approach
57 Put another match to
58 Founder of Bolshevism
59 Hotshot
60 Hauls off and whacks
61 Banishment treatment
62 Golfer's gadget

DOWN
1 Sophisticated
2 Liz or Rip
3 Greek goddess of wisdom
4 Wild profusion
5 Squid's squirt
6 Batman and Robin, e.g.
7 Be mistaken
8 Hasidic leaders
9 English track
10 Squealer in London
11 Large-billed finch
12 Psyche division
13 Albanian cash
18 Mine product
19 Hither's opposite
23 More lenient
24 Tel __-Jaffa
25 Delay
27 Linkletter and Garfunkel
28 Word with whiz
30 Prom partner
31 Gentlemen
32 Supplies personnel to
33 Dog's master
34 Slow-moving
35 Lash mark
36 Forceful advertising
37 Loom up
38 August sign
41 Like jambalaya
42 Tails go-with
43 For each
44 Judicial decision
46 Castle protectors
47 Ron who played Tarzan
48 Infirmary furniture
50 Nincompoop
51 Vocal inflection
52 Spherical object
53 Hillary Clinton, __ Rodham
54 Critic Reed
55 Black cuckoo
56 Nothing

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	M	I	T	S	■	D	I	S	T	■	S	H	I	P
U	B	O	A	T	■	U	R	I	S	■	T	B	A	R
P	A	U	L	R	E	V	E	R	E	■	R	O	M	E
■	■	■	L	I	K	E	N	■	■	C	O	M	B	S
E	D	U	■	P	E	T	E	R	R	A	B	B	I	T
A	R	M	I	E	S	■	■	I	O	N	E	S	C	O
T	O	A	D	■	■	M	O	T	T	O	■	■	■	■
■	P	R	I	N	C	E	R	A	I	N	I	E	R	■
■	■	■	■	L	A	D	D	S	■	■	C	R	A	W
I	S	R	A	E	L	I	■	■	D	A	K	O	T	A
P	O	O	R	R	I	C	H	A	R	D	■	S	E	X
E	N	I	D	S	■	■	O	R	E	A	D	■	■	■
C	O	L	E	■	P	H	I	L	I	P	R	O	T	H
A	M	E	N	■	J	O	S	E	■	T	E	R	R	A
C	A	D	S	■	S	E	T	S	■	S	W	E	E	T

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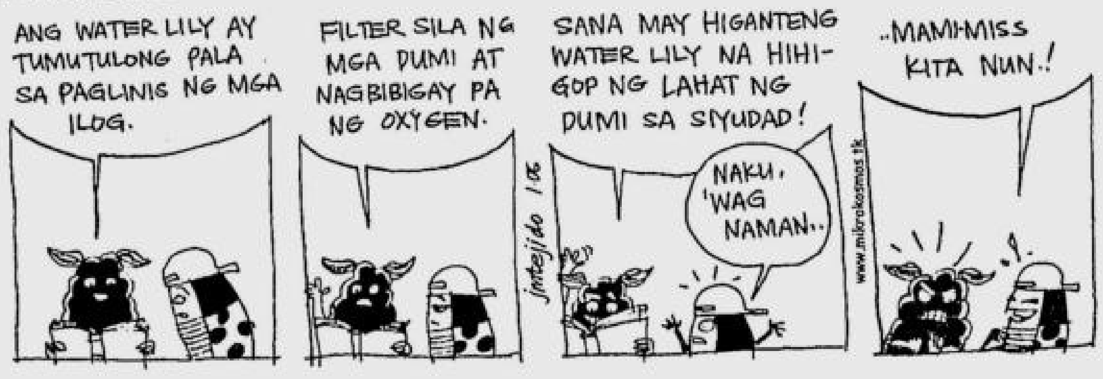
1/31/06

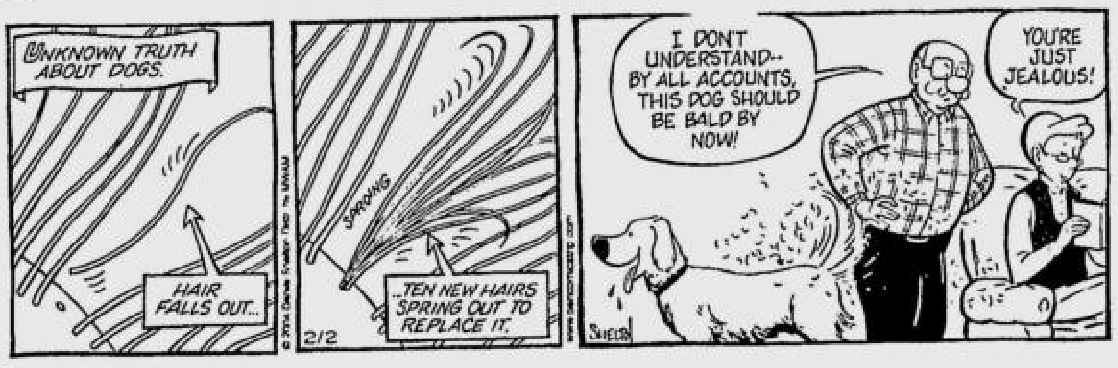
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG WATER LILY AY TUMUTULONG PALA SA PAGLINIS NG MGA ILOG.
FILTER SILA NG MGA DUMI AT NAGBIBIGAY PA NG OXYGEN.
jmtejido 1.06
SANA MAY HIGANTENG WATER LILY NA HIHIGOP NG LAHAT NG DUMI SA SIYUDAD!
NAKU, 'WAG NAMAN..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
..MAMI-MISS KITA NUN.!

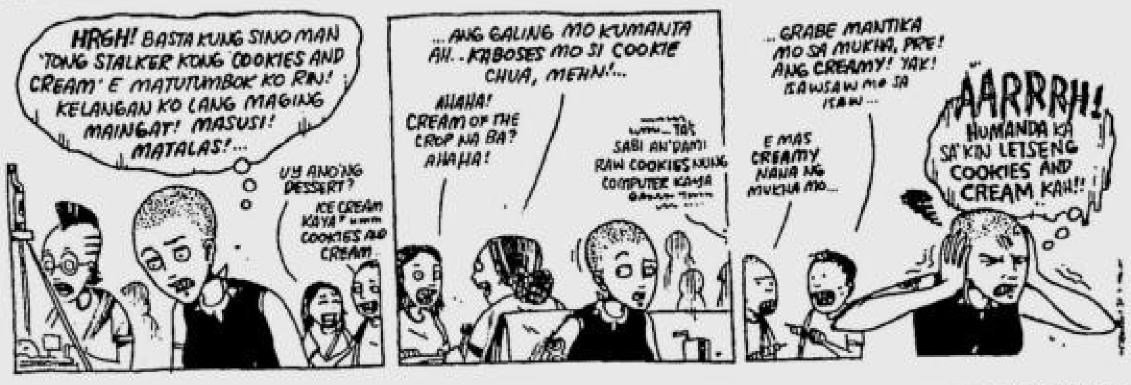
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


UNKNOWN TRUTH ABOUT DOGS.
HAIR FALLS OUT...
SPROING
...TEN NEW HAIRS SPRING OUT TO REPLACE IT.
2/2
I DON'T UNDERSTAND-- BY ALL ACCOUNTS, THIS DOG SHOULD BE BALD BY NOW!
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS!
SHELTON

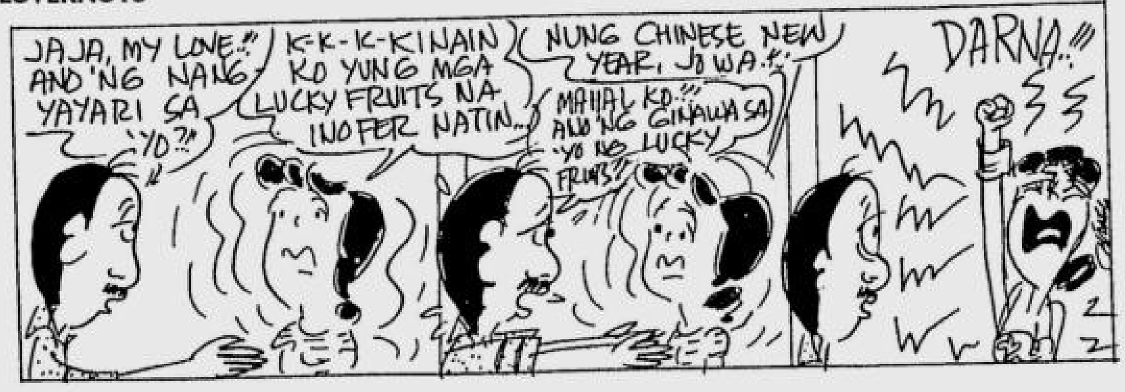
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HRGH! BASTA KUNG SINO MAN 'TONG STALKER KONG 'COOKIES AND CREAM' E MATUTUMBOK KO RIN! KELANGAN KO LANG MAGING MAINGAT! MASUSI! MATALAS!...
UY ANO'NG DESSERT?
ICE CREAM KAYA? with COOKIES AND CREAM
...ANG GALING MO KUMANTA AH..KABOSES MO SI COOKIE CHUA, MEHN!...
AHAHA! CREAM OF THE CROP NA BA? AHAHA!
SABI AN'DAMI RAW COOKIES NUNG COMPUTER KAYA
...GRABE MANTIKA MO SA MUKHA, PRE! ANG CREAMY! YAK! ISAWSAW MO SA KAW...
E MAS CREAMY NANA NG MUKHA MO...
AARRRH! HUMANDA KA SA'KIN LETSENG COOKIES AND CREAM KAH!!

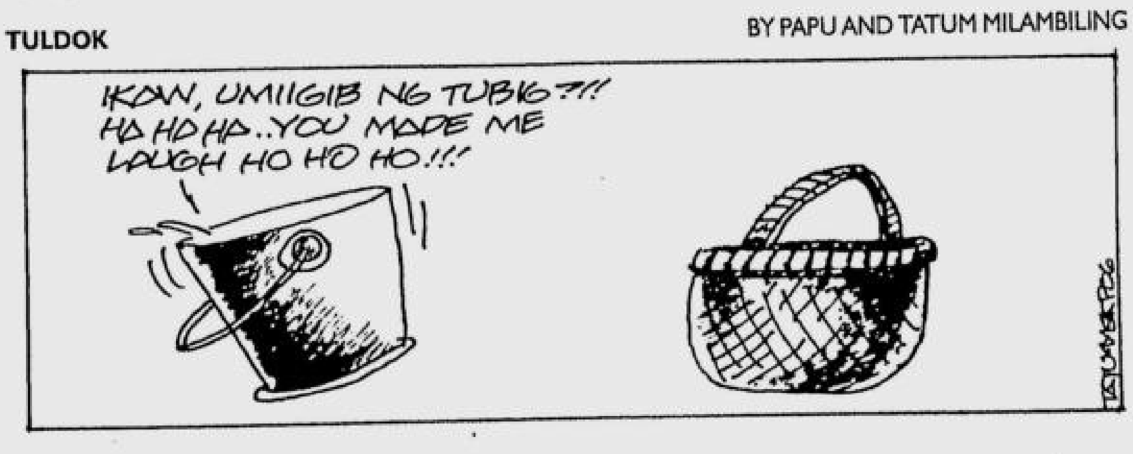
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, MY LOVE!! ANO'NG NANGYAYARI SA 'YO?!
K-K-K-KINAIN KO YUNG MGA LUCKY FRUITS NA INOFER NATIN..
NUNG CHINESE NEW YEAR, JOWA..!
MAHAL KO..!! ANO'NG GINAWA SA 'YO NG LUCKY FRUITS?!
DARNA..!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

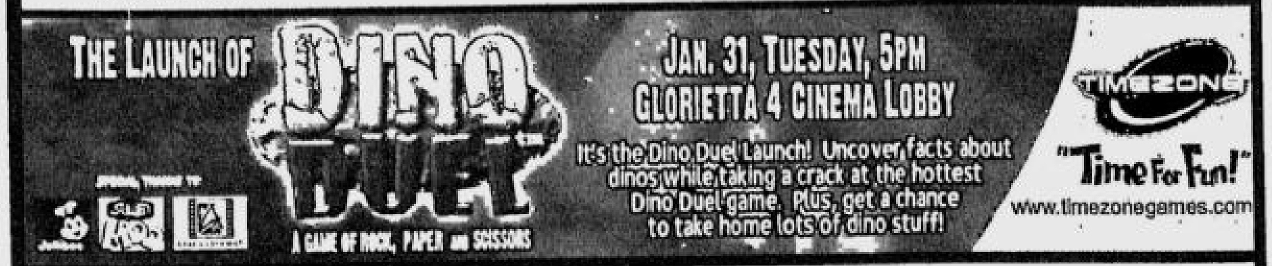

IKAW, UMIIGIB NG TUBIG?!! HA HO HA..YOU MADE ME LAUGH HO HO HO!!!

AYALA CENTER
GLORIETTA • GREENBELT

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

AYALA CENTER CEBU

AYALA MALLS
Love Mall!



THE LAUNCH OF DINO DUEL
A GAME OF ROCK, PAPER and SCISSORS

JAN. 31, TUESDAY, 5PM
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMA LOBBY

It's the Dino Duel Launch! Uncover facts about dinos while taking a crack at the hottest Dino Duel game. Plus, get a chance to take home lots of dino stuff!

TIMEZONE
"Time For Fun!"
www.timezonegames.com

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
2nd Philippine Dive Trade Show January 26 to 28 2006	Meet & Greet Bob The Builder January 29, 2006	Sinulog 2006 Exhibit January 6 to 26, 2006 - Paseos

AYALA GREENBELT

Jazz Festival
January 23, 2006

GREENBELT 1 Onstage AYALA CENTER

ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts, stage plays & coporate events
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Registration for Art Workshops now on-going at Ayala Museum
For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29.
Online registration at www.ayalamuseum.org

AYALA CINEMAS

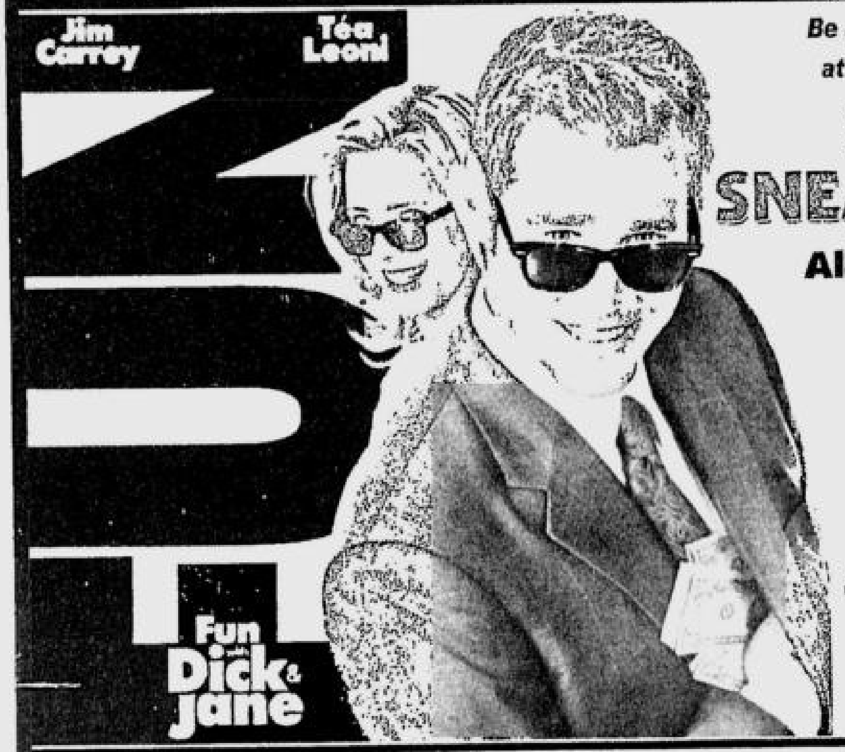
AYALA CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 HALF LIGHT	2 THE MAID	3 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 ZATHURA	2 HALF LIGHT	3 THX UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 RUMOR HAS IT	5 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2	7 THE MAID
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 ZATHURA	2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX ZATHURA GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 RUMOR HAS IT GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HALF LIGHT GUARANTEED SEATS	5 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2	2 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION		
	3 ZATHURA	4 HALF LIGHT	5 RUMOR HAS IT	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 ZATHURA	2 UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	3 THE FAMILY STONE	4 JARHEAD



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Alabang Town Center
Glorietta 1
Glorietta 4
Greenbelt 3
Market! Market!

TODAY
JAN. 30 (Mon.) & 31 (Tue.)

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

Regular run begins February 8 at Ayala Cinemas

Customer Service text hotline:	0917 6095900
Customer Service text hotline:	Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center -	842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu -	(032) 231 5342 loc 324

All-Digital Cinemas

MARKET! MARKET!
The fun is in the finds
Developed and managed by Ayala Land, Inc.

Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Customer Service Hotline: 886-7515

Free Seating Cinemas: P90.00

① Cheaper by the Dozen 2
② Zathura
③ Half Light
④ Underworld: Evolution
⑤ The Maid

EVENTS! EVENTS!

MARKET! MARKET!
The fun is in the finds

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MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9116

1 ZATHURA • THX
2:15 4:40 7:05 9:30

2 ZATHURA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

3 HALF LIGHT
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

4 UNDERWORLD 2
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
12:10 2:35 5:00 7:25 9:50

7 RUMOR HAS IT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 THE MAID
1:25 3:35 4:45 7:55 10:00

9 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
Sneak Preview

10 JARHEAD
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 ZATHURA
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

2 HALF LIGHT
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

3 THE MAID
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:20 10:00

4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
Sneak Preview

6 UNDERWORLD 2
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 RUMOR HAS IT
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

2 ZATHURA
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:00

4 UNDERWORLD 2
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

5 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
Sneak Preview

6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

7 The Chronicles of NARNIA
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

8 THE MAID
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 THE MAID
2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 UNDERWORLD 2
5 ZATHURA
6 The Chronicles of NARNIA
7 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE Sneak Preview

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 ZATHURA
2 UNDERWORLD 2
3 FUN W/ DICK & JANE Sneak Preview
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2

Jim Carrey
Téa Leoni
FUN
Fun with Dick Jane
Coming Soon

SNEAK PREVIEWS

Robinsons Movieworld
january 30 & 31

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dasmariñas•starmills.pampanga

Opens on
FEBRUARY 08
MTRCB Rating:
PG-13

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 FUN W/ DICK & JANE Sneak Preview
2 ZATHURA
3 RUMOR HAS IT
4 JARHEAD
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 ZATHURA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 THE FAMILY STONE
5 JARHEAD

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
2 FUN W/ DICK & JANE Sneak Preview
3 THE FAMILY STONE
4 ZATHURA

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 FUN W/ DICK & JANE Sneak Preview
3 THE FAMILY STONE
4 ZATHURA

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 The Chronicles of NARNIA
3 ZATHURA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
5 THE MAID
6 FUN WITH DICK & JANE Sneak Preview

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 THE FAMILY STONE
4 FUN W/ DICK & JANE Sneak Preview
5 SAINT ANGE
6 ZATHURA

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 ZATHURA
2 The Chronicles of NARNIA
3 IN HER SHOES
4 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 SAINT ANGE

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 ZATHURA
2 The Chronicles of NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 THE FAMILY STONE
5 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
6 BEAUTIFUL BOXER

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Laban, laban
sa Petron Rev-X!
PETRON
X-pert sa makina, X-tra ang kita.

Gov't rejects bids for 91-day T-bills

Foils banks' attempt to push rates higher

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT REJECTED ALL BIDS FOR THE 91-DAY treasury bills for the second consecutive auction yesterday after the market again tried pushing the benchmark rate higher.

Had the Treasury accepted the bids, the yield of the 91-day paper could have risen by 45.5 basis points to 5.318 percent from 4.863 percent two weeks ago. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

National Treasurer Omar Cruz told reporters that it was unreasonable to accept the rates being sought by the banks because these were higher than those prevailing in the secondary market.

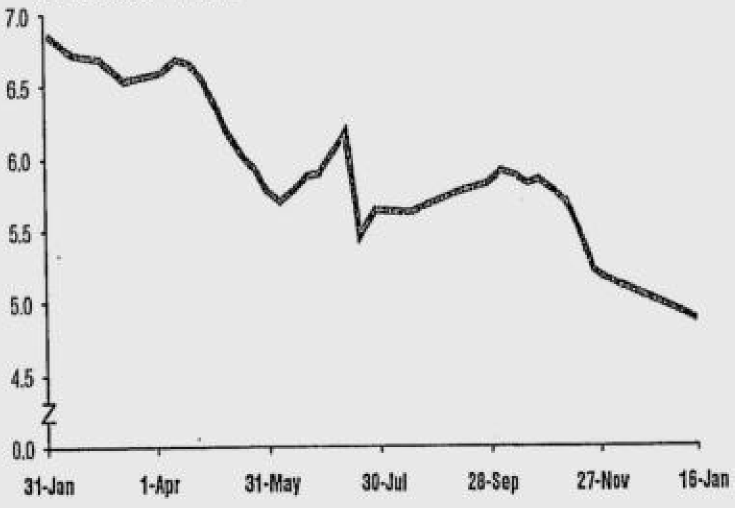
"If they (banks) were trading at those levels (in the secondary market), then I could have accepted the bids," Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's auction. He added that rates for the 91-day bills were moving sideways by about 5 to 10 basis points downward in the secondary market.

Tenders for the three-month government securities reached P1.82 billion, higher than the government's offering of P1 billion but much lower than the demand for other government securities.

The Treasury accepted more bids for the 182-day bills than what was programmed to partly compensate for the rejection of bids for the 91-day bills. The auction committee

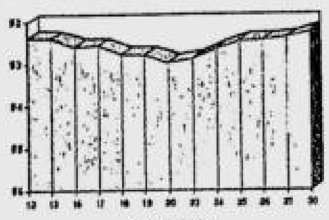
GOV'T/B2

91-DAY TREASURY BILL RATES
Jan. 31, 2005-Jan. 16, 2006



INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JANUARY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 52.25 = $

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 30, 2006

¥ 117.38 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 30, 2006

GOLD: $558.20-558.70

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 27, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Shares continue to rise

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.47 PERCENT higher yesterday for the fifth straight session of gains, boosted by the release of better than expected 2005 economic growth data, dealers said.

They said investors continued to accumulate stocks of companies that were likely to post strong 2005 earnings when the reporting season begins next month.

The composite index added 10.02 points to 2,131.91, after trading between 2,118.48 and 2,136.46. Volume was 3.04 billion shares worth 1.28 billion. *AFP*

Makati office space vacancy down to 4.9%

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

REAL-ESTATE ADVISORY FIRM CB RICHARD Ellis Philippines is upbeat on the prospects for the Philippine property sector this year, noting that vacancy rates will continue to drop and that banks are ready to unload more acquired assets should a law granting tax perks to such activities be extended.

In a briefing yesterday, CBRE Philippines director for corporate services Jose Radovan III said vacancy levels in Makati office spaces fell to 4.9 percent at the end of the fourth quarter as multinational companies continued to outsource their call center and other back office functions to the Philippines.

Vacancy rates may continue to shrink this year, its second consecutive year of continued decline since the third quarter of 2004, he said.

CBRE Philippines chair Fredrick Santos said the Philippines continued to lure call center firms since it has one of the cheapest rental rates in Asia.

At the end of the fourth quarter last year, leasing rates at the Makati Central Business District was at $11 a square meter or an average of P575/sq.m. compared with $69 in Hong Kong, $30 in Shanghai, $37 in Singapore and $96 in Tokyo.

Robust demand for office space is driven by continued demand from new and expanding call centers or business process outsourcing firms as well as information technology-oriented companies.

CBRE Philippines said the number of call

MAKATI/B8

WHAT'S INSIDE

How to be a better investor /B2
Gov't upgrades 2006 export targets /B3

Our No.1 Deals for 2006

We're letting you start the year right by giving you the best deals from Toyota Motor Philippines, the country's No. 1 in Passenger Cars, Commercial Vehicles and Overall Sales.* Enjoy these offerings for both the Altis and the Innova:

LOW DOWNPAYMENT OF
P100,000.

Avail of this great New Year deal for a brand new Altis or Innova through Toyota Financial Services (TFS).

GET A TOYOTA VALUE CERTIFICATE WORTH UP TO
P35,000.**

Toyota Value Certificates (TVCs) can be used for Toyota Genuine Accessories, Chattel Mortgage, LTO Registration, Insurance or TFS Financial Package.

*** P35,000 worth of TVCs for the Altis, P30,000 worth of TVCs for the Innova*

COROLLA ALTIS INNOVA
A Beautiful [R]evolution

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FINANCIAL SERVICES
Also avail of hassle-free leasing packages from TFS.

Special TFS Financing Package

MODEL	SRP	DOWNPAYMENT	12	18	24	36	48	60
Altis 1.8 G A/T	939,000	100,000	72,497	49,924	39,785	28,390	22,908	19,780
Altis 1.8 E A/T	878,000	100,000	67,006	46,142	36,776	26,243	21,175	18,282
Altis 1.6 E A/T	800,000	100,000	59,984	41,307	32,928	23,497	18,960	16,366
Altis 1.6 E M/T	765,000	100,000	56,834	39,137	31,201	22,265	17,966	15,506
Altis 1.6 J M/T	708,000	100,000	51,702	35,604	28,389	20,258	16,347	14,106
Innova 2.5 G A/T	1,045,000	100,000	82,485	56,802	45,253	32,293	26,057	22,505
Innova 2.5 G M/T	980,000	100,000	76,634	52,772	42,047	30,005	24,211	20,909
Innova 2.0 G A/T	985,000	100,000	77,084	53,082	42,294	30,181	24,353	21,031
Innova 2.0 G M/T	930,000	100,000	72,133	49,673	39,580	28,244	22,790	19,681
Innova 2.5 E M/T	885,000	100,000	68,082	46,883	37,360	26,660	21,512	18,575
Innova 2.5 J M/T	798,000	100,000	60,250	41,490	33,009	23,598	19,041	16,439
Innova 2.0 J M/T	748,000	100,000	55,749	38,390	30,602	21,837	17,621	15,210

All these wonderful deals, as our way of saying THANK YOU to you, our dear consumers, for making Toyota Motor Philippines, the country's No.1.

Promo runs until January 31, 2006
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0265 Series of 2006.
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364-4071 to 75 TOYOTA BALINTAWAK-NORTH, 927-7215 / 17 / 30 / 39 / 927-7242 / 44 / 48 / 52 / 927-7257 / 62 / 05 / 927-7268 / 69 TOYOTA BATANGAS CITY, INC., (043) 723-7380 / (043) 723-7630 TOYOTA BICUTAN PARANAQUE, 777-0500 TOYOTA CABANATUAN CITY, INC., (044) 463-8481
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TOYOTA DAGUPAN CITY, INC., (075) 517-2026 to 28 / (075) 522-0771 / 6734/ 4773 TOYOTA DASMARIÑAS CAVITE (046) 850-2036 / (046) 850-2020 TOYOTA DAVAO CITY, INC., (082) 234-0998 / (082) 234-2904 / (082) 234-8640 TOYOTA ILOILO CITY, INC., (033) 320-6115 to 19
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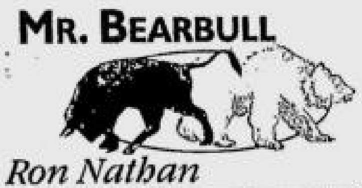
How to be a better investor

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

THIS IS THE YEAR OF THE HOT dog, or fire dog. Greetings from me, (KUNG HEI), and my wife, (FAT CHOI). I was given a Chinese watch, which goes tikoy tikoy instead of tick tock. Back to serious stuff.

Cut your losses quickly

Financial journalist JACK SCHWAGER wrote two books, MARKET WIZARDS I and II, in which he interviewed at great length about 50 of the top fund managers who had established themselves over a long period of time as consistently beating the market. Most of the fund managers traded commodities and currencies because these are leveraged, usually 10 to 1, but a few traded equities.

He expected to find a common denominator to account for their success but he was amazed to find that they were so diverse in character and method. Many were technical analysts who only studied charts and took no interest in fundamentals; others only studied fundamentals and never looked at charts.

Apart from methodology, their characters were so different. Some were studious types with enough degrees to fill a thermometer while others never even finished high school or had been expelled from college. Some were athletic types who ate simple food and woke up early to exercise while others were obese and delighted in being couch potatoes, stuffing themselves with hamburgers and French fries. Some were loners, some were happily married with children, and a few were transvestites. They came in all shapes and sizes—black, brown and white. Some were religious, some agnostic and one kept making puns.

It took him quite a long time to find the connection especially as their entry points were wrong 63 percent of the time. That is worse than random (50 percent), yet they consistently made money year in, year out. What was their secret, the common denominator? After months of sifting information and going through the notes of his interviews, he found it.

They all cut their losses quickly and let their profits run. So they could stand a number of consecutive small losses just so long as they found a few winners and let them become big winners. This is exactly the opposite of what the average investor does. He takes quick profits and hangs on to his losses. Admit it, dear reader, you also do it. You have to adopt the slogan POP COLA, shown below:

P rolong
O ur
P rofits.

MR. BEARBULL/ B3

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 30, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	157,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59.5	58.5	59	1,736,100
China Banking Corp.	605	605	605	605	360
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	61.5	62	61.5	62	178,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30	29.5	29.5	207,700
Philippine National Bank	32	32	32	32	500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	1,100
Security Bank Corp.	38	38.5	38	38	56,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	32	32	32	32	47,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.72	0.72	330,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	1,075,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	144	144	144	144	50,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2090	2100	2090	2100	250
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.65	520,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	47.5	49.5	47.5	48.5	405,000
Manila Electric Co. A	14	14	13.75	13.75	26,800
Manila Electric Co. B	22	23	22	22.75	962,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	1,169,000
Petron Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.75	4.75	5,684,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	20,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	36.5	38	36.5	38	366,800
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.8	3.65	3.8	50,000
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	230,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.56	1.6	1.56	1.6	23,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	63.5	63	63	110,400
San Miguel Corp. B	86	86	86	86	20,300
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	10,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	12,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	700,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	220,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.2	1.3	1.16	1.24	14,257,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.4	4.45	4.35	4.45	2,353,000
CHEMICALS					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	70,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.7	0.73	0.7	0.73	200,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.085	0.075	0.08	257,000,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.009	56,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,000,000
Ayala Corp.	330	332.5	330	332.5	127,890
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.52	220,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.75	4.8	579,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	15,000
APC Group Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	2,150,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	30,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	240,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.88	167,000
ATN Holdings Inc. B	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.95	1.06	0.95	0.96	160,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	5,098,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	475,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	156,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.24	1.32	1.24	1.24	1,057,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.35	4.3	4.3	1,233,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	700,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	500,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	2,270,000
SM Investments Corp.	229	237	229	237	32,250
South China Resources Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	50,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	50,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.25	4,640,500
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.02	1.08	3,790,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.19	1,900,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.5	1.58	1,113,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	200,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	630,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	2,510,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	450,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	320,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.54	1.56	1.52	1.54	4,196,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	10,000
Interport Res.	0.0046	0.0046	0.0044	0.0044	23,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	5,000,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	520,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	1,100,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.48	5,094,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	6,230,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.135	0.145	0.135	0.145	1,690,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	300,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	44,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8	4,940,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	2,990,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	100
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.91	0.91	0.9	0.91	1,410,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	760	765	750	755	7,060
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.45	3.35	3.4	2,782,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1855	1860	1855	1855	80,060
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.205	0.185	0.2	15,080,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	15,400,000
Philweb Corp.	0.033	0.036	0.033	0.036	1,497,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.94	2	1.94	1.98	363,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	12	12	12	12	45,226,400
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	40,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.7	3,001,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	340,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	112,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Jardine Davies Inc.	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	1,000
Paxys Inc.	7.9	8	7.9	7.9	708,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.14	1.18	1.1	1.12	952,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.56	1.64	1.52	1.52	612,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6	6	5.9	5.9	370,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	45,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.235	0.235	0.23	0.23	1,310,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	6,110,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	5,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	96,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	553,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.4	1.48	1.4	1.42	3,845,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.16	2.2	2.14	2.16	6,964,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26	26.5	26	26.5	199,900
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	153,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	164,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	50,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	190,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	12	12	12	12	10,800

CURRENCIES

January 30, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.826241	1.000000	52.4350
Japan	Yen	0.007051	0.008534	0.4475
United Kingdom	Pound	1.461043	1.768300	92.7208
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106529	0.128932	6.7605
Switzerland	Franc	0.643591	0.778938	40.8436
Canada	Dollar	0.718971	0.870171	45.6274
Singapore	Dollar	0.507520	0.614251	32.2083
Australia	Dollar	0.621094	0.751710	39.4159
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.192145	2.653153	139.1181
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220337	0.266674	13.9831
Brunei	Dollar	0.505965	0.612370	32.1096
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000088	0.000107	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021207	0.025667	1.3458
UAE	Dirham	0.224962	0.272272	14.2766
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.210300	63.4621
India	Rupee	0.018778	0.022727	1.1917
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220360	0.266702	13.9845
Mexico	New Peso	0.079127	0.095767	5.0215
New Zealand	Dollar	0.564913	0.683714	35.8505
South Africa	Rand	0.134585	0.162888	8.5410
Korea	Won	0.000851	0.001030	0.0540
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025873	0.031314	1.6419

Gov't rejects bids …

From page B1

accepted P1.4 billion worth of bids compared with the government's offering of P1 billion through the six-month government paper.

The rate for the 182-day bills fell by 4.4 basis points to 6.268 percent. The six-month securities were oversubscribed, with bids totaling P6.6 billion.

The rate for the 364-day bills reached 7.289 percent, slightly higher by 1.26 basis points than the rate two weeks ago. Bids for the one-year government securities were likewise rejected last week because of the higher rates sought by the market. Tenders for the one-year bills reached P6.04.

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-Admission Test: Saturday, June 3, 2006. Classes start September 2006

-Application Period: February 20, 2006 to June 2, 2006

-Scholarships: Ten scholarships available.

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-Application Period: January 2, 2006 to March 3, 2006.

-Foreign applicants must take the GRE and TOEFL.

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Gov't upgrades 2006 export targets

Forecast based on expected recovery in agriculture, mining shipments

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT HAS UPGRADED ITS export growth target this year to 10 percent from an earlier forecast of 8 percent on the expected recovery in semiconductor, agricultural and mining shipments.

At the sidelines of a joint congressional hearing on economic affairs yesterday, National Economic and Development Authority director for policy and planning Dennis Arroyo said that the government is expecting a strong recovery from the slump of last year and has agreed to adopt the 10-percent growth target for this year.

Arroyo also said that the import bill is expected to rise by 11 percent this year. The original forecast was a 9-percent expansion.

From January to November last year, the country's export earnings grew by only 2.7 percent from the previous year due to the sluggish demand for electronics, which accounted for 60 percent of total export receipts.

The government had set a two-year export target of 10 percent for 2005 and 2006, but it scaled down its forecasts during an assessment in October. The target for 2006 was also slashed to 8 percent.

"We're back to 10 percent," Arroyo said.

According to the Neda official, government economic managers have considered the forecasts of the Department of Trade and Industry—in consultation with the export sector—and they feel confident that the country can bounce back from the pullout of Toshiba Corp. from domestic laptop computer production early last year.

Arroyo also cited other factors favoring agricultural and mining exports.

"There's the Early Harvest Program with China, which has become a big export market for the Philippines," Arroyo said.

The Early Harvest Program is a trade arrangement under the China-Asean Free Trade Area framework, which reduces the tariffs of agriculture products, including livestock, meat, fish, dairy products, vegetables, fruits and nuts.

"Plus, you'll have higher metal exports because of rising metal prices around the world, driven by Chinese growth ... and by the reconstruction of (typhoon affected) areas in the US," Arroyo said.

He added the Philippines would benefit from food trade deals with Australia, including those involving pineapple and mango.

The 10 percent export growth target was pushed by exporters of semiconductor, electronics, garments, machine parts and food sectors, which are the country's top export producers.

Meanwhile, import spending is expected to be fueled by purchases of capital goods and raw materials to support exports and the recovery of manufacturing.

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PLDT, Philweb close to sealing deal

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILWEB CORP. IS EXPECTED TO PUSH through with the planned sale of 20 percent of the company's outstanding stocks to the technology unit of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. once it signs an agreement with ePLDT this week.

"We are in the final stages of our negotiations [with ePLDT] and we expect to sign the [memorandum of agreement] not later than this week," said Philweb president Eric Recto in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

Recto said that the price and payment terms for the investment are still being finalized.

Philweb Corp. is an Internet gaming firm controlled by former trade chief Roberto Ongpin.

Recto believes that the company has complied with PSE rules when it disclosed last Jan. 26 the Philweb board of directors' approval of ePLDT's planned investment.

A wholly owned unit of the telco giant, ePLDT is expected to buy 24 billion shares of Philweb. The company's stock price yesterday closed at 3.6 centavos apiece, higher than the closing of 3.1 centavos last Thursday, when the disclosure was made.

At yesterday's closing, the 24 billion shares would be worth P864 million.

Philweb, according to Recto, is seeking clarification from the PSE as to what caused the puzzling memo issued by PSE president Francis Lim over the weekend.

The PSE on Saturday issued a memo to brokers, expressing "caution" on the "misleading disclosure" of Philweb on its impending deal with ePLDT.

The next day, the PSE president issued a revised memo to brokers. This time, the words "caution" and "misleading" were omitted and, in their place, was a reminder for the public "to exercise prudence in making investment decisions."

Recto insisted that Philweb's Jan. 26 disclosure clearly stated that ePLDT had not yet made the investment and that the parties were still negotiating the terms, including the price of the proposed investment.

"We would like to understand what's driving these somewhat confusing statements from the PSE," Recto said in an interview. "Nothing at this point has been mentioned to us, either in writing or verbally, that we did anything wrong"

In fact, he said, the PSE even agreed that the statement on the Philweb-ePLDT deal was "a timely disclosure."

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Mr. Bearbull

From page B2

Cut
Our
Losses
Aggressively

Become a momentum trader and go with the flow.

Never average down

It follows from the above 2 rules that averaging down cannot be right, except in one instance, to which I will refer later. I regard myself as a kindly soul. I love children and cats, and never kill any living creature, even a cockroach. It must be my Buddhist leanings, but for investors who mindlessly average down, I am in favor of the death penalty. They should be slowly barbecued because they have deliberately broken the first two rules.

Here are true stories of what happened to two of my best clients back in 1996/1998. The first started with P4 million and had a 100-percent margin account. In that year, even an imbecile would have made money as everything kept going up all year, especially in the last two months when it rose vertically to a high of 3,420 on Jan. 9, 1997.

Well, this client did very well with my help and his P4 million became P18 million, to which you should add the P4 million margin. It was my mother's 90th birthday so, of course, I had to return to London to be with her. I told him not to buy anything while I was away and I liquidated all his investments for safety.

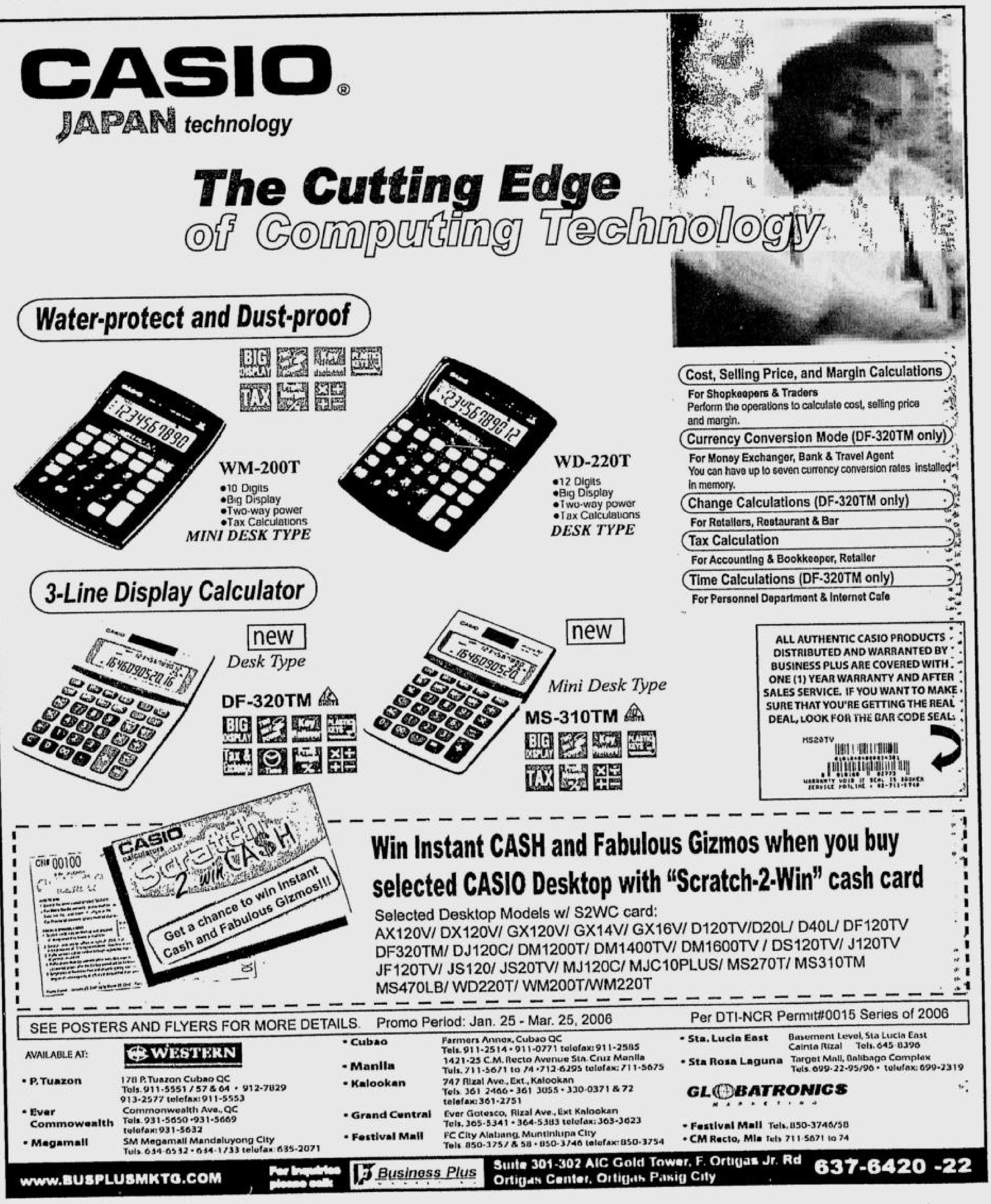
Owing to an airport strike in Germany, I returned 3 days late, and was horrified to discover that he had attended a meeting of Universal Rightfield, a subsidiary of DMC, and bought 4 million shares at P5.60. I was furious that he had invested everything in a third liner, right at its peak. I told him to sell at P5.30, but he said he could not take a loss of more than P1 million. I pointed out that he had made P14 million but he was adamant. He continued to watch the shares fall until eventually, the company declared bankruptcy and was delisted worthless.

The second client also did well until his neighbor told him to buy 20 million WEB at 54 centavos. As the shares had risen from 1 centavo, I did not agree but they went up to 58 centavos. Then the price started to fall and his first move should have been to cut loss at 54 centavos. The shares continued down to 50, 40, 30, 20, 10 centavos. At last, in despair, he sold them all at 4 centavos and lost 95 percent of his capital, allowing for expenses. During the fall, I managed to prevent him from averaging down, otherwise he would have been totally wiped out.

There is one exception. If you follow the degree of risk in my newsletter or use any form of momentum indicator, Commodity Channel Index, CHANDE Momentum, Williams R, or a fairly fast stochastic, you can average down when you get a BUY signal on the indicator. This is only a short-term maneuver so that when the price goes up, you can get out square. You should put in the same amount of money, not buy the same number of shares. You will reach break-even more quickly.

(To be continued.)

mrbearbull@hotmail.com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Sony Ericsson launches new products in Las Vegas show

SONY ERICSSON HAS STARTED THE year with a big bang for mobile music lovers. The company introduced the latest of its Walkman phones, the Sony Ericsson W810, plus two Walkman-branded music accessories in the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show.

"Since the launch of the W800 flagship Walkman phone in August last year, consumers across the world have been embracing the concept of the mobile phone as a credible digital music player, and enjoying high quality music anywhere, anytime without having to carry a dedicated music device. Sony Ericsson's Walkman phones are redefining how consumers listen and enjoy music, and the W810 strengthens our music phone line-up with the addition of dedicated music buttons on the front of the phone and an expanded choice of how users upload music to the phone," said Miles Flint, president of Sony Ericsson.

Unveiled was the Sony Ericsson W810, a Quad-band EDGE phone (850/900/1800/1900 MHz) that enables users to transfer their legacy CD collection or access operator music download services, while staying connected anywhere in the world.

This sophisticated new Walkman phone model in Satin Black with orange trim comes with a 512MB removable Memory Stick, which can be upgraded to 2GB currently available in retail outlets. This allows a wealth of music tracks, photos, video and other multimedia files to be stored on the phone.

The W810 supports industry standard MP3 and AAC music file formats and comes complete with quality HPM-70 stereo headphones which feature a standard 3.5 mm headphone jack for personal customization.

Consumers can easily and quickly load music to the phone; either uploading their legacy CD collection onto the W810 from a PC via USB 2.0 using the provided Disc2Phone music management software, or by purchasing new music from operator specific over-the-air download services. This enclosed PC software makes it easy to sort, browse and transfer files on the 512 MB Memory Stick PRO Duo, which provides capacity for approximately 150 music tracks – the equivalent of around 15 full length CDs.

A dedicated Walkman button pulls up the music menu regardless of what other application on the phone is in use. Positioned just below the phone's screen are all the most common music controls needed (Play/Pause/Stop/Skip Track/Volume) to move easily between tracks or adjust the volume on the speaker or headphones. Engaging Mega Bass improves the sound experience even further.

As with other members of the Walkman phone family, music automatically pauses when an incoming call is received and begins playing again when the call ends. The phone can also operate in a music-only mode for those occasions when the phone function must be disengaged, such as during air travel.

The W810 is equipped with EDGE Class 10 technology, to allow quick and easy data transfers and Internet access, and Bluetooth Wireless technology for connectivity with Bluetooth handsfree headsets and sharing data with other Bluetooth-enabled devices.

The Sony Ericsson W810 is also a great imaging device enabling users to capture great still pictures and video featuring with integrated 2 mega pixel, auto-focus camera with photo light, and easily recognizable digital still camera interface.

Meantime, the new Walkman-branded accessories are the Portable Speakers MPS-60 and the Music Desk Stand MDS-60.

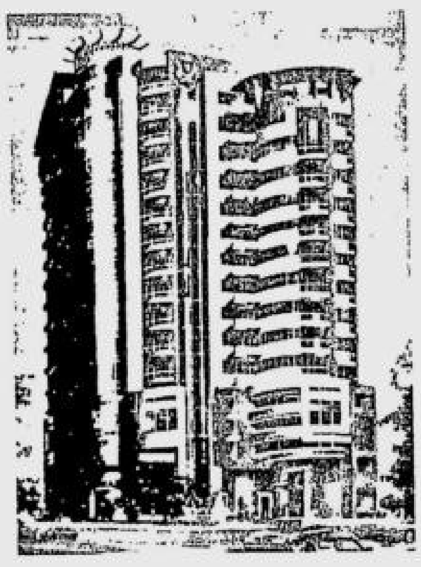
The Portable Speakers MPS-60 can be plugged into a Sony Ericsson mobile phone to enjoy stereo sounds. Stylish and lightweight, the speakers are powered from the mobile phone. It is packaged with a travel case and comes in black, gray and silver.

For those serious about sound quality and functionality, the Walkman-branded Music Desk Stand MDS-60 allows phone charging while music is playing. Compact and slim yet with a very rich sound, its sleek design makes it the perfect for the desk or at home. Its protective folding design allows true mobility. The Music Desk Stand MDS-60 comes with loudspeaker covers in white and orange. The MDS-60 comes in silver, white and orange.

The MDS-60 and MPS-60 are the newest additions to a complete portfolio of Sony Ericsson music accessories. The range includes, among other products, the Stereo Portable Handsfree HPM-70, the FM Music Transmitter MMR-60, the Music Cable MMC-60 and Home Audio System MDS-70.

The Sony Ericsson W810 starts shipping globally Q1 2006, as well as the Portable Speakers MPS-60. The Music Desk Stand MDS-60 follows globally in Q2 2006.

Malate Crown Plaza: Modern living within your reach



RIGHT IN THE HEART OF MALATE, Manila's famous entertainment district, lies the crown of Malate - the Malate Crown Plaza, a 17-storey premier residential and commercial condominium at the corner of Adriatico and San Andres Streets.

Malate Crown Plaza features stylish condominium residences ranging from studio-type, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. The condominium project is now complete, ready for occupancy and is 90 percent sold out, with the units turned over to its buyers in May last year.

Aside from providing its residents with picturesque views of the wonderful Manila Bay sunset and allowing them to spend serene afternoons gazing at this famous spectacle, this newest landmark in Malate also offers excellent amenities designed for a cosmopolitan lifestyle.

One can have fun swimming in the clean blue waters of its pool and maintain a healthy body at the gym and sauna or play badminton at the condominium's roof deck. It has a spacious lobby, a high ceiling and ample ventilation and lighting, and is also equipped with a 24-hour security, intercom and CCTV monitoring system.

Apart from these, Malate Crown Plaza is also complete with two scenic and one service elevator, a three-level parking space, a standby generator and a fire alarm and sprinkler system, which makes it truly an ideal home for businessmen, middle to top executives, retirees, expatriates, as well as investors in search of a secure financial decision.

Located at the bustling corner of Adriatico and San Andres Streets, the condominium is also highly suitable for business and retail establishments. Commercial spaces are available at the ground floor, basement and mezzanine that would be viable for restaurants, convenience stores, coffee shops, banks, music lounge and bars, spa and fitness centers and travel and tours, among others.

Being at the vantage point of Manila's tourist belt, it likewise provides residents convenient access to malls, schools, a church and a market. Leisure and entertainment centers also abound, with malls such as Robinsons Place Manila and Harrison Plaza just a few minutes away, while Remedios Circle and its row of bars and restaurants, is just around the corner.

Malate Crown Plaza is beside Malate Catholic School and near San Andres Fruit Market, Malate Church, Aristocrat Restaurant, Pure Gold Supermart, Rajah Sulayman Park and the newly-developed Roxas Boulevard Bay Walk.

Inside the building, one can find Metrobank, Blue Sea Foot Spa, Izakaya Taisho Japanese Restaurant, a photo and video shop and a travel agency.

Residential units are attractively priced starting from P1.7 million and above to appeal to practical home buyers and investors.

With all these attractions, life is definitely better at Malate Crown Plaza. It offers convenience, comfort and security. Truly an ideal residence where everything you need and the luxury of modern living are within your easy reach.

For inquiries, please call (632) 536-0033, (632) 404-0509 and (0917) 5307871. You can also e-mail them at malatecrown@yahoo.com or visit their website at www.malatecrownplaza.philcondos.com.

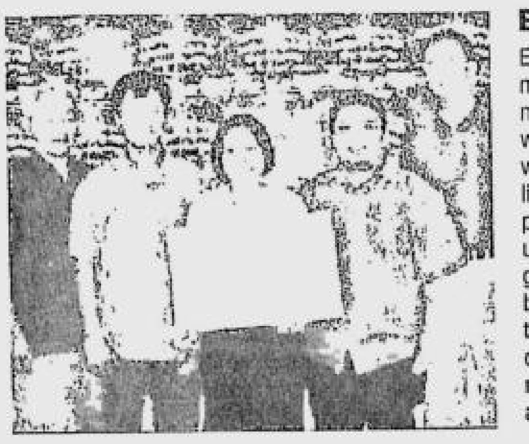
SEAIR
Memorandum of Agreement Signing
SuperFerry

SEAIR, SUPERFERRY INTERLINE AGREEMENT

Domestic carrier South East Asian Airlines (SEAIR) has tied up with SuperFerry, the country's leading sea transport, for the Sail and Fly and Sea and Air SuperConnect Promos, which allow travelers to maximize their island-hopping experience and budget by traveling to selected routes via SEAIR and Superferry. Sail and Fly offers seamless transfers in air and sea travel covering Manila-Caticlan/Dumaguit, Cebu-Caticlan/Dumaguit, Manila-Busuanga/Puerto Princesa; Cebu-Siargao, Cebu-Camiguin, Cebu-Cotabato and Manila-Cebu. Sail and Fly packages also include 3 days/2nights hotel accommodations with breakfast. Sea and Air SuperConnect increases the frequency of trips and complements the routes of both SEAIR and Superferry. Promo period is until further notice. For inquiries and a full listing of routes included in the Sail and Fly and Sea and Air Promos, call SEAIR at (02)849-0100 or SuperFerry at (02)528-7000. Signing the contract are (from left) Capt. Eliseo Tabora, vice president for operations, SEAIR; Capt. Nikos Gitsis, executive director, SEAIR; Patrick Tan, vice president for commercial affairs, SEAIR; Ava Engel, executive vice president and CEO for passenger travel and leisure, SuperFerry; Andrew Deyto, associate vice president for revenue management, SuperFerry; and Pam Reyes, segment head, SuperFerry.

PNB INAUGURATES GSIS BRANCH

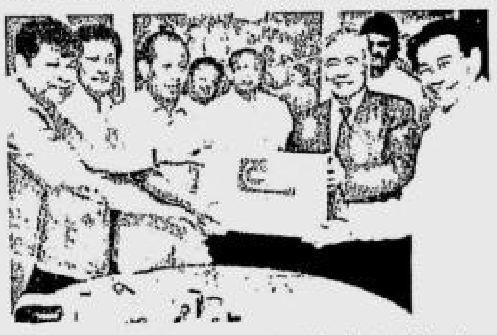
The Philippine National Bank opens its GSIS Branch at Level 1, GSIS Financial Center in Pasay City. At the ribbon-cutting ceremony last Dec. 15 were GSIS President and General Manager Winston Garcia (left) and PNB president and CEO Omar Byron T. Mier (right). As a service partner PNB reinforces PGM Garcia's bold initiatives to provide a higher level of service to GSIS members. The newly opened PNB GSIS Branch is, therefore, expected to deliver greater convenience, reliability and responsiveness to myriad of government employees, pensioners, employees and suppliers at GSIS Headquarters. PNB GSIS Branch is the former PNB PICC Branch.



EQ PROMO GRAND WINNER

EQ Diapers recently concluded its highly successful nationwide promo 'Text-Panalo, New Year Pa-Premyo'. EQ would like to congratulate the grand prize winner, Yolanda Tinoy from Cagayan de Oro City, who won P500,000 in cash. Also, EQ Diapers would like to thank the thousands of people who joined the promo. You have made it a great success. Keep on using EQ Diapers. In photo receiving her check is grand prize winner Yolanda Tinoy (center), flanked by (from left): Danny Chan (consultant, Golden Century Mktg, sub-distributor of JS Unitrade Merchandise), Craig Vuriol (husband of Ms. Tinoy), Guillermon D. Celis (distributor manager, J.S. Unitrade), and Tomas Sia (owner, Golden Century Mktg).

UNILAB DONATES P25M-WORTH OF ENERVON FOR POULTRY WORKERS



Fulfilling its commitment to help the nation prepare against bird flu, United Laboratories Inc (Unilab) signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Agriculture last Jan. 11, to donate P25 million worth of Enervon multivitamins to strengthen the immune system of poultry workers in the 21 bird flu hotspots in the country. Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban (3rd from left) and Unilab president and CEO Carlos C. Ejercito (2nd from right) signed the MOA witnessed by Unilab and DA officials. The Enervon donation supplements Unilab's donation of US$1.25 million worth of anti-bird flu medicines to the Dep't. of Health last Dec. 1, for a total assistance to date of P91 million. Flanking Sec. Panganiban and Ejercito are (from left) Bureau of Animal Industry Director Dr. Davinio Catbagan, DA Undersecretary Salvador Salacup and Conrado Baylon, Univet executive.

DIGITAL EXCHANGE, ETC CHANNEL AWARD PROMO WINNERS

Digital Exchange, ETC Channel presented cool gadgets to the winners of the 'Name The Store' promo. Shown are (from left): Sony Ericsson's Patty Balao, Globelines' Bea Dacanay, PalmOne-Pod Central's Jed Quiambao, Globelines' Jenny Velasco, Gary Ramirez of Digital Exchange, MJ Handyman of Globe Telecom, Globequest Wiz's Martin Lopez, Mikey Rivera of Globe Telecom and Samsung's Annaise Fragante.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

Name of Project · Brief Description	Item 1 – One (1) lot replacement of the existing 11,700 fluorescent lamps of 40 and 20 watts with 28 and 17 watts T-8, slim-type energy efficient lamps, respectively, including 5,850 electronic ballasts per BSP Scope of Work and Specifications Item 2 – One (1) lot supply and installation of fluorescent lighting louvers for retrofitting at the BSP Complex buildings per BSP Scope of Work and Specifications
Approved Budget for the Contract	Item 1 – P8,505,000.00 Item 2 – P14,968,000.00
Contract Duration	Within four (4) months after receipt of Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding per lot. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	31 January 2006 – 15 February 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	17 February 2006 2:00 p.m.
3. Opening of Bids	07 March 2006 2:00 p.m
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance within the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P4,250.00 for Item 1 and P7,480.00 for Item 2 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation

(Sgd.) MELPIN A. GONZAGA
Vice-Chairman

(PDI–January 31, 2006)

Bits Clips

MHS Grand Alumni Night

MAKATI HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI CIRCA '81 IN participation with Makati High School Foundation Day Celebration 2006 presents MHS Grand Alumni Night (Batches 1972 to 2005) on Feb. 18, at 5 p.m., and MHS Class '81 Silver Anniversary on April 19, at 4 p.m. to be held at Makati High School grounds located at General Luna St. barangay Poblacion, Makati City. For more details contact Mira Manalo at 895-9243, Fe Gratela at 881-3707, Noel Allejos at 779-3984 and Lea Lumabao at 814-2170 or e-mail at lealumabao@yahoo.com or visit the website http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MHSAlumniCirca_81.

AHS Class '71 get together

CALLING THE ATTENTION OF ALL GRADUATES of Araullo High School Batch 1971, there will be a Alumni Homecoming on Feb. 18 at Araullo High School at Taft Avenue cor. UN Avenue, Manila. For particulars, please call Lilibeth Neyra-Tiu at 890-2564; Lynette Bernardo-Monillas at 400-7261; Susan N. Pasia at 927-4245 local 4101; Mira Guiking-Mendoza at 839-7295/0916-386-2139; Ariel Salonga at 850-4055/0918-929-1752; Ed R. Savares at 589-53-22/0919-816-8703.

Alliance formed to fight rotavirus infection

A GROUP OF DOCTORS FORMED AN ALLIANCE TO intensify the fight against rotavirus infection, a disease that causes severe diarrhea and vomiting among infants and children. Called RotaPhil (Rotavirus Working Group for Training and Advocacy of Healthcare Personnel in the Philippines), the alliance is part of an effort to heighten awareness about rotavirus infection and to educate the public about the possible risks and consequences, among them death due to dehydration, if the disease is not properly managed. Part of Rotaphil's initial efforts to spread awareness about rotavirus infection is the production of a handbook that provides essential facts about rotavirus and how to properly manage and prevent the disease. The handbook will also serve as a quick reference for medical students, general practitioners and healthcare workers involved in the care of infants and children.

PCHS Grand Reunion

CLASS 1956, GOLDEN JUBILARIAN OF THE PASAY City High School will host this year's grand alumni homecoming at the school campus on March 18, at 1 p.m. Co-hosts 1961 (Sapphire) and 1966 (Ruby) jubilarians will join the activities. Class 1952-1968 are also expected to attend. For inquiries, call: Ligaya Manabal 831-9916, Tess Sampang 831-6653, Josie Beltarn 913-4258, Ed Advincula 833-2311.

Seminary 're-Juvenation'

ALL ALUMNI OF THE REDEMPTORIST JUVENATE in Antipolo are invited to three days of fun, reminiscing and "re-Juvenation" as the seminary holds its grand homecoming and reunion on Feb. 17 to 19, at the Redemptorist Retreat House in Lipa City, Batangas. Be there and renew old ties and friendships with our brothers in faith. For details, call Ted Mendoza at 633-3683 or text him at 0918-9119062. You may also e-mail him at tjm1855@yahoo.com. you may also e-mail Resti Reyes at restireyes@yahoo.com.

'Stand up for Love' concert

CELEBRATE MUSIC AND GOODWILL WITH HAngad and the Gawad Kalinga Prayer Mountain community on Feb. 5. The fund-raising concert, "Stand up for Love", will serenade you with liturgical and inspirational songs, and share with you a 'work of heArt' that is Gawad Kalinga. The concert aims to raise funds for the various educational programs of the Prayer Mountain site in Antipolo, and to inspire people to participate in the work of nation building. This is organized by the Gawad Kalinga Bayanihan Brigade (for Prayer Mountain), which is a group of yuppies that are giving back to society by utilizing their professional skills to contribute to their adopted community.

PCC Alumni Homecoming

PASIG CATHOLIC COLLEGE WILL BE CELEBRATing its 93rd Foundation Week on Feb. 13 to 19. High School Batch '81 will host the annual alumni homecoming on Feb. 18, at the PCC Quadrangle. High School Batch '56,'61,'66,'71,'76,'86,'91, and '96 will co-host the event. Registration starts at 5 p.m. For details contact Rosario Caguingin at the Alumni Office at 641-7544 or cell. no. 0197-286309 or Anthony Sanchez at 0917-3280805.

Godiva Skin Station Valentine's Day promo

GODIVA SKIN STATION OFFERS A VALENTINE'S Day promo to all its valued clients. Between Feb. 6 to 19, customers with a minimum of P500 service purchase are entitled to 1 free Godiva Teddy Bear Fun Soap. Meanwhile, a Club G member who avails of any service from his/her membership package within the promo period automatically gets a free Godiva Teddy Bear Fun Soap (Club G members may only claim once). For more details, visit your nearest Godiva Skin Station or call 751-6140, 890-9845 loc. 24 or 0917-9649828 (Makati Bel-Air) or call 939-1105 (SM Fairview Annex).

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006

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THE 2005 AGENCY PERFORMANCE AWARDS

Government honors outstanding private recruitment and manning agencies

The Philippine government, through the Department of Labor and Employment and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, gives honor to outstanding Philippine private recruitment companies through the Agency Performance Awards.

The Top Performer Award and the Excellence Award, are given to deserving recruitment and manning agencies in recognition of their exemplary performance in promoting decent and quality overseas employment for Filipinos as well as its pioneering achievement, industry leadership, and entrepreneurial initiatives. The Award of Excellence is given to consistent Top Performer Awardees for their industry leadership, foreign exchange inward remittances and social awareness and responsibility. Special citations are also given to some of the agencies for their particular achievements in the areas of deployment, foreign exchange generation, marketing, and sustained efforts in the use of the electronic submission system or the e-Submission.

Started in 1984, the institutionalization of the POEA's awards and incentives program pushed the overseas employment stakeholders to strive for excellence in their field. Last year, the government also paid tribute to outstanding employers which provided quality employment to our Filipino workers; and exceptional overseas Filipino workers received accolades through the Bagong Bayani awards. The 2005 Agency Performance Awards shall be held at the Manila Pavilion Hotel on January 31, 2006.

The Awardees

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Landbased Sector
Atlantic Gulf & Pacific Company of Manila Inc.
Dahlzhen International Services, Inc.
EDI Staffbuilders International Inc.
EEI Corporation
Eligardi Enterprises Inc.
Gatchalian Promotion Talent's Pool Inc.
Industrial Personnel & Management Services Inc.
International Skill Development Inc.
Manpower Resources of Asia Inc.
Omanfil Int'l Manpower Development Corp.
Philippine Hospitals & Health Services Inc.
Sangle Bernabe International Inc.

Seabased Sector
Anglo-Eastern Crew Management Philippines Incorporated
Avantgarde Shipping Corp.
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Barko International Inc.
Career Philippines Shipmanagement Inc.
CF Sharp Crew Management Inc
Dolphin Shipmanagement Inc.
Hanseatic Shipping Phils. Inc.
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Cherub Manpower Inc
Deltavir Overseas Job Placement & General Services Inc.
Dynamic International Services Corp.
East West Placement Center Inc.
Eureka Personnel Mgt Services Inc.
First Champion International Entertainment Inc.
Grand Placement & General Services Corp.
Infinity International Manpower Services
J Star International Promotion Inc.
JS Contractor Incorporated
Lead Resources Management Corp.
Mission Way Manpower Services Inc.
Reliable Recruitment Corporation
Supreme Overseas Manpower Export Specialists Inc.

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Seabased Agencies
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Jebsens Maritime Inc.
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NYK Fil-Ship Management Inc.
Oriental Shipmanagement Company, Inc.
OSM Shipping Phils. Inc.
Seapower Shipping Enterprises, Inc.
United Philippine Lines, Inc.

Pioneering efforts in developing quality labor markets
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Bond Worldwide Inc.
Grand Placement & General Services Corp.
Northwest Placement Inc.

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Landbased Agencies
Gatchalian Promotion Talent's Pool, Inc.
International Skill Development, Inc.
JS Contractor Incorporated

Seabased Agencies
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Net Ship Management, Inc.
NYK-Fil Ship Management, Inc.
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LBS-e Recruitment Solutions Corporation

For the active involvement in the various policy formulation and procedural/operational consultation work on the overseas employment program and participation in various projects/programs for the promotion of welfare and employment of overseas Filipino workers and seafarers

Confederated Association of Licensed Entertainment Agencies (CALEA)
Overseas Placement Association of the Philippines (OPAP)
Philippine Association of Service Exporters, Inc. (PASEI)
Philippine Association of Manpower Agencies Deploying to Lebanon (PAMADEL)
Pilipino Manpower Agencies Accredited to Taiwan, Inc. (PILMAT)
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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP INC. 1137 P. Gil St Paco Mla WILL SELL ALL EXPIRED PLEDGES OF JUNE AND JULY 2005 ON FEBRUARY12, 2006 SUNDAY AT 10:00 AM (SONS OF J. LANUZA-AUCTIONEER)

AUCTION SALE

JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP INC.
G/F Ever Gotesco Grand Central Caloocan City will sell all unredeemed pledges for the month of JULY & AUG 2005 on February 17, 2006 at 11:00am
J.Lanuza-Auctioneer.
(PDI - January 31, 2006)

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or 722-1155

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, the recognized leader in the newspaper industry with its balanced news and fearless views, is committed to helping our trade partners achieve its business goals and serving the community via generation of employment.

We are in need of

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to work for our Distributor Partner in the areas of Pampanga, Bataan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Zambales

JOB DESCRIPTION:
✓ Will handle a sub-distributor partner to grow the business.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- College graduates from the localities;
- Highly motivated; Aggressive; Hardworking;
- Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills both in English and Filipino;
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- Computer Literate.

Send your *Resumé* to:

GQY Distribution Group Inc.
Dolores Homesite Extension
(near Jun-Jun's Bibingka Rest., McArthur Highway)
City of San Fernando Pampanga
or call/fax (045) 961-4048

*(For **Business Dev't Supervisors** applicants please look for **Mr. Mar Manabat** or **Mr. Jess Yap** or can email your resumé to jessy@mail.imet.net.ph or gqydistribution.com.ph)*

and

*(For **Customer Service Representative** applicants please look for **Lynn Marcelo**)*

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REUBEN MARCO S. UMALI, JR.

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 29, 2006

He is survived by his wife **Raquel**; daughters **Erika** and **Nina**; parents **Ruben** and **Girlie**; brothers **Sagy**, **King** and **Randy**; sisters **Kristine** and **Angel**; sisters-in-law **Agnes**, **Marj**, **Mabel** and **Mimax** and brother-in-law **Raffy** as well as nephews & nieces. They and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will lie in state at Bauihinia Chapel,
La Funeraria Paz-Sucat
(inside Manila Memorial Park) until
Thursday, February 2, 2006.

With faith in the Resurrection
THE DE LA SALLE BROTHERS OF THE PHILIPPINE DISTRICT
and THE PHILIPPINE LASALLIAN FAMILY
announce the death of

BR. ANDREW GONZALEZ FSC

(MACARIO ARNEDO GONZALEZ)

Born in Manila, Philippines on 29 February 1940 and died at the De La Salle University Medical Center, Dasmariñas, Cavite on 29 January 2006. He served as a De La Salle Brother for a total of 50 years.

A man of vision, a man with a mission, institution builder, academician, linguist, intellectual. A disciple and citizen, prophet and professional, who brought the transforming power of the Gospel to bear on every human endeavor in order to realize God's kingdom of truth, justice, love and peace.

His remains lie in state at the Chapel of the Most Blessed Sacrament
De La Salle University, 2401 Taft Avenue, Manila.

The Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated on Thursday, 02 February 2006, 9:00 am. Cremation will follow.

In lieu of flowers, we will appreciate donations to the DLSU Charity Hospital in Apalit, Pampanga. Please make checks payable to the "DLSU Science Foundation (for Br. Andrew Gonzalez FSC)."

"Even when I walk through a
dark valley, I feel no harm. For
you are at my side, your rod
and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Gemma B. Raymundo

July 13, 1949- January 18, 2006

Wish to convey our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to our relatives, friends and all those who sent condolences, flowers, donations, offered Masses and prayers, called from abroad, attended the funeral rites and helped and comforted us in so many ways during our time of bereavement.

In Loving Memory
on the 19th Death Anniversary of

RUFINO R. SANTOS, JR.

who passed away on January 31, 1987

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches:

St. Andrew, the Apostle Parish Nicanor Garcia, Bel Air, Makati City	6:30 am, 12:15 nn, 6:30 pm
The National Shrine of Sacred Heart Dao, Makati City	7:00 am, 12:15 nn, 6:00 pm
Santuario de San Antonio Parish Forbes Park, Makati City	12:15 pm
St. John Bosco Parish Arnaiz, Makati City	7:30 am, 12:15 pm, 6:00 pm
St. Francis Church Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City	6:00 am
St. Roque Parish Church Pateros, Metro Manila	6:00 am
San Pedro Parish Church San Pedro, Laguna	6:00 am

His family requests relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Our dearly beloved

JERONIMO TEODORO "TEDDY" W. CORPUS

Joined his Creator on 29 January 2006 at the age of 39.

His loving mother, **Bessie**; children **Tofi** and **CJ**; fiancee **Ina Remedios**; siblings **Anna C. Say**, **Atty. Emelyn Corpus-Martinez**, **Cenen** and **Victor**; brothers-in-law **Joey** and **Adrian**; sisters-in-law **Kat** and **Che**; and his relatives request for prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel D, Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Q.C. Final services will be held on Saturday, 4 February 2006.

ALEJANDRO AQUINO HERNANDEZ

Was called home to the Lord
on January 29, 2006 at the age of 69.

He shall be missed by his dearest wife **Odette**, children **Maripi** & **Steve**, **Michelle**, **Mightor**; grandson **Jacob**; relatives and friends.

Daily Holy Mass will be celebrated for his intentions at 8pm.

His remains lie in state at the Lisbon Chapel at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Paranaque. Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park.

The family requests your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

We will miss you Dad, you will always be in our hearts.

AMB. RODOLFO S. SANCHEZ

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 28, 2006 at the age of 72.

His wife **Ofelia**, together with their children **Jocelyn** and **Arthur**, **Cecilia** and **Rolo, Edwin** and **Rachelle**, and grandson **Christopher**, request pious readers, especially their relatives and friends, to join them in praying for his eternal bliss in heaven.

His body lies in state at their residence at #8 Kapitan Ato St., Bgy. Santa Cruz, Pasig City.

A Mass will be celebrated at the Immaculate Concepcion Parish Church, Pasig Plaza, Pasig City at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 4, 2006 before interment.

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"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

41st Death Anniversary of

BIBIANO GARCIA Y DE LA ROSA

Of Angat. He was born in Bulacan, Bulacan

His wife **Maria de Guzman Sayo** (†); children **Anita** (†) & **Dr. Gavino B. Tantoco** (†), **Jose** (†), **Corazon** (†), **Concepcion** (†), **Sofia** and **Porfirio R. Perez**.

Masses will be offered on January 31, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. at the following churches:
Sta. Monica Parish, Angat; St. Andrew Parish, Norzagaray;
St. Joseph Shrine, Proj. 3, Q.C.; Lord of Divine Mercy Parish,
Sikatuna Village, Q.C.

- Finished Elem. & High School at Ateneo de Manila of Manila
- Finished Bachiller en Artes (sobresaliente) & Perito Mecanico (sobresaliente) in 1894 & 1896, resp., UST.
- Municipal Treasurer of Hagonoy, Bulacan in 1905
- After passing gov't exam as Provincial Treasurer, he was assigned as Provincial Treasurer of several provincial capitals of the South and Cavite 1906 - 1920

In Loving Memory
On the 21th Death Anniversary of

HONORIO POBLADOR, JR.

February 1, 2006

Holy Masses will be offered in his memory on February 1, 2006 at the following churches:

SACRED HEART PARISH Welfareville, City of Mandaluyong	6:00 a.m.
MARY THE QUEEN PARISH Little Baguio, San Juan, Metro Manila	6:00 a.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila	7:15 a.m.
SAN MIGUEL PRO-CATHEDRAL Gen. Solano, San Miguel, Manila	7:00 a.m.
OUR LADY OF SORROWS PARISH F.B. Harrison Street, Pasay City	6:00 a.m.
SAN FELIPE NERI PARISH City of Mandaluyong	6:00 p.m.
DON BOSCO MAKATI Pasay Road, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
SAINT ANDREW PARISH Bel-Air, City of Makati	6:30 p.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO Forbes Park, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUORI CHURCH Magallanes Village, City of Makati	6:00 p.m.
ST. SEBASTIAN CATHEDRAL Bacolod City	7:00 a.m.
SACRED HEART SHRINE Bacolod City	6:00 a.m.
SAN ANTONIO PARISH Bacolod City	7:00 a.m.

His family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

The Missionary Benedictine Sisters
St. Scholastica's Priory, Manila
announce the death of

Sister Lutgard Ramin, OSB

at St. Benedict's Home, Marikina
on January 28, 2006.

*The sisters and their mission partners especially at St. Scholastica's Academy, San Fernando, Pampanga, where she spent 28 years of her religious life, her brother **Jose**, 91 and sister **Gloria**, 89 and relatives from Oas, Albay request the pious readers to pray for her.*

Her remains lie in state at St. Scholastica's Chapel, Manila.

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque on February 1, 2006 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass. **Fr. Ed Ramin**, her grandnephew will officiate the Mass.

OSCAR H. LAGMAN, JR.

Peacefully joined our Creator
on January 28, 2006 at the age of 56.

His bereaved wife **Tess Villamin**; children **Dominic & Grace**, **Terence & Lani**, **Kookie & Peachy** and grandchildren **Paolo**, **Astrid**, **Polo**, **Alex**, **Thea**, **Niko** & **Yana**. They and other relatives & friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at their residence at #3 San Agustin, City of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Interment will be on February 1, 2006 at the Good Shepherd Memorial Park, Dolores, CSFP after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at the San Agustin Church.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate; ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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CLASSIFIEDS

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  - PCP Diplomate

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  - Submit a research proposal
  - Certificate of Fellowship

III. **Adult Pulmonary Medicine***
  - PCP Diplomate

* *Deadline for submission of application is on February 27, 2006*
* *Academic Year 2006 starts on April 1, 2006*

IV. **CV Anesthesiology Division****
  - 3 years Residency in General Anesthesia accredited by PBA (Board eligible)

V. **Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery Division****
  - 4 years Residency in General Surgery accredited by PCS (Board eligible)

VI. **Pediatric Pulmonary Medicine****
  - PCP Diplomate

** *Deadline for submission of application is on February 17, 2006*
** *Academic Year 2006 starts on April 1, 2006*

VII. **Pediatric Cardiology**
  - 3 years Residency in General Pediatric accredited by PPS
  - at least passed written examination for Diplomate in Pediatrics by the PPS

You can submit your application as soon as possible.

General Requirements:
1. Medical Diploma
2. Transcript of Records with the General Weighted Average
3. Itemized Board Rating
4. Three (3) Letters of Recommendation with at least one letter written by the Training Officer &/or Director of the previous Training Programs (duplicate letters or photocopies signed by different Doctors will not be accepted)
5. Four (4) pcs. 2" x 2" picture colored
6. Certificate of Residency in required specialty
7. Specialty Board Certificate in required specialty

Please address your communications to:
ARISTIDES G. PANLILIO, M.D.
Department Manager II
Office of Education and Research
Philippine Heart Center
East Avenue, Quezon City

For further inquiries, please contact Ms. Carmela M. Ocasion or Ms. Cleopatra Q. Palencia with Tel. Nos. 925-2401 locals 3234, 3235, 3236 & 3237 and Telefax 926-9622, or you can email to: oer@phc.gov.ph

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Save the Children
UK

The Philippines Programme
of
Save the Children – UK
announces
the closure of its office and cessation of operations at the close of office hours on 31 March 2006.

3/F, #89 Scout Castor St., Quezon City

More CLASSIFIED ADS on page B4

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National Transmission Corporation

Section I. Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Various Information and Communication Technology Equipment
(Reference No.: PB050710-EL0068 (PB2)

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO)* through the *CY 2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TRANSCO Board* intends to apply the sum of *Php 11,648,098.00* being the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply and Delivery of Various Information and Communication Technology Equipment.** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for *Various ICTs*. Delivery of the GOODS is required *within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of approved Purchase Order*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders, starting **January 31, 2006 to March 6, 2006 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.** at the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee in the amount of ***Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00)***. The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***February 17, 2006 at 2:00 P.M.*** at the same address below.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 A.M. of March 7, 2006.** All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form and amount.

FORM OF SECURITY	AMOUNT
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	1% of ABC
2. Bank Guarantee	1.5% of ABC
3. Surety Bond	2.5% of ABC
4. Foreign government guarantee	100% of ABC

or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on **March 7, 2006 / 10:00 A.M.** at the *Admin Conference Rm. same address below*. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 9812235 / Fax No. (632) 9228432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – January 31 & February 6, 2006)

CLASSIFIEDS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Environmental Management Bureau-Cordillera Administrative Region (EMB-CAR, tel. #442-2346) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project: Procurement and Installation of an Air Quality Monitoring Equipment in Baguio City, briefly described as: One (1) lot, Towable, Continuous Automatic Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Equipment with Telemetry System that would suit Baguio City's Topography and Climate, with an **Approved Budget of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00)** with Contract Duration of One Hundred Twenty days (120) (Installation, Commissioning and Training of EMB Personnel/manpower) and Delivery Period of Ninety Days (90).

Checklist of eligibility requirements for bidders is available at the BAC Secretariat.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. Further, interested suppliers/bidders may submit documents for eligibility check as per RA 9184 (envelope A) on **February 10, 2006** to the BAC Chairman upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00)** to qualify for bidding.

A pre-bid conference shall be held on **February 22, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the EMB-CAR Conference Area, DENR-CAR Compound, Gibraltar Road, Baguio City. Deadline for the submission of the following a refundable fee of 2.5% Surety Bond and Technical Specification of the equipment (Envelope B) and Bid offer (Envelope C) will be on **March 1, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.** and the opening of bids will follow immediately.

The EMB reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality therein, accept the offer considered most advantageous to the government and annul bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of the contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s. The EMB further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may incur for the bidding and does not guarantee that an award will be made

(Sgd.) ENGR. ROLANDO C. REYES
Chairman, EMB-CAR BAC

(PDI - Jan. 31 & Feb. 6, 2006)

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Saving money via life insurance

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

ASUN IS AN OBSTETRICIAN/gynecologist and a bosom friend of my anesthesiologist daughter Clarissa. Both work in Ospital ng Makati. Recently, Clarissa brought home a life insurance proposal Asun had received from a financial adviser, actually an agent.

Asun wanted to find out what I thought of the proposal. Asun was being offered a variable life insurance policy, or simply, a variable contract, as opposed to a standard fixed contract.

When you buy a standard 20-year endowment policy, with a sum insured of P100,000, you are actually buying two contracts fused into one. The first contract guarantees that if you die anytime within the 20-year period, your beneficiary receives P100,000. This is the death benefit. The second contract guarantees that if you survive the 20-year period, you receive P100,000. This is called the living benefit.

The price, or premium, you pay is fixed throughout the 20-year term. Along the way, there are the non-forfeiture benefits. For example, there is the cash value, which you can borrow. Or, if you want to discontinue the policy, the sum insured is reduced.

The insurance company splits the premium. The first part is used to pay for a term insurance policy; this takes care of the death benefit. The second part is invested at a guaranteed fixed rate, usually 8 percent; this is the living benefit.

At the start, the term insurance is for the full P100,000. As the investment portion builds up, the term insurance is reduced. Throughout the 20-year period, the sum of the term insurance and the investment portion always equal P100,000. The living benefit you get at the end of the 20-year period is the investment portion alone.

Under a variable contract, Asun buys two contracts fused into one, as well. The first contract is still the term insurance contract, the death benefit. The second contract, the living benefit, is variable. Investment earnings are not guaranteed. They can be lower or higher than under the standard life insurance policy. The company has an investment pool into which Asun's premium will be placed. The earnings depend on how well or ill the investment pool makes out.

By the way, Asun was being offered a policy denominated in US dollars. This makes the policy attractive, but the premium will also have to be paid in US dollars.

Under the variable contract, Asun will be betting that the company's investment pool will do very well.

I made no comparative study of the premiums of the standard and the variable contract. But my gut feel is, dollar for dollar, the premium for a variable contract is higher.

I advised Asun that if she has enough of the standard type of life insurance policy to protect her three children still in school, then, and only then, should she consider buying the variable contract.

Asun's problem is not how much money she will have at age 65, which is quite attractive under the variable contract, assuming the investment fund does well.

Asun's bigger problem is how much money will her three children have so they could go on with the kind of lives they have been used to if a runaway truck rams her car while she is coming home late one evening after an operation in the hospital.

It is not what may happen to Asun 14 years from now. It is what might happen tonight.

Makati office . . .

From page B1

center seats had grown dramatically to 60,000 at the end of last year from only 1,500 seats at the end of 2000.

Radovan said new projects were being constructed in alternative CBDs such as the Bay Area and Bonifacio Global City where land was available.

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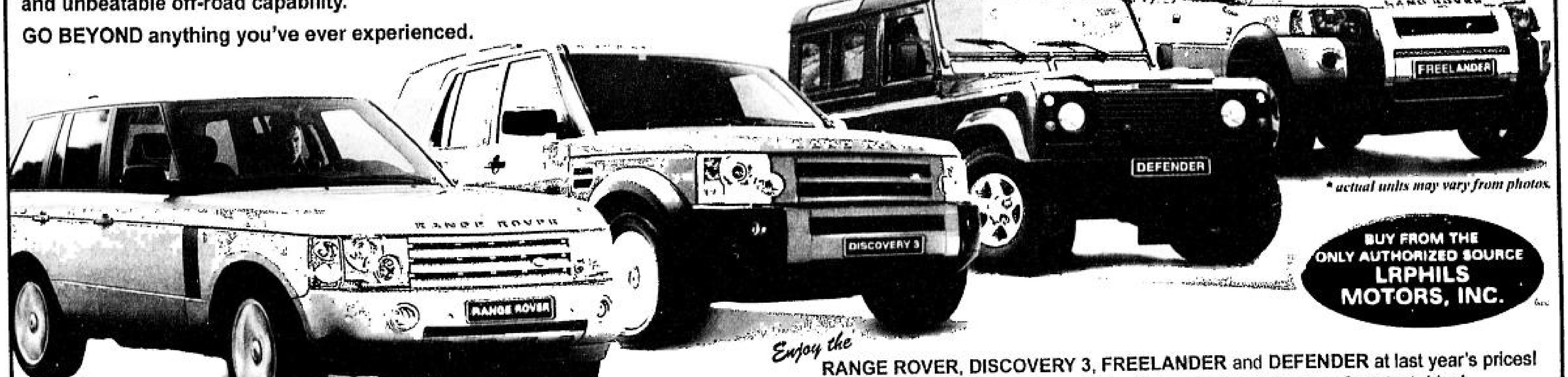

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Q & A on abs workout /C3

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

Menopause is not a disease

By Elizabeth Lolarga
Contributor

DR. MICHAELA GLOCKLER assured women that menopause is not a time of chaos or a form of disease.

Rather, she said, it is "a period of life which needs to be considered, created and worked with. Treatment is only necessary when hope has run out and the need for help is greatest."

Glockler gave a lecture at Balay Kalinaw on the invitation of a group headed by Mariel Francisco.

The physician's expertise is anthroposophy, which means human wisdom. The term, coined by Rudolf Steiner, refers to the body of knowledge about the human being and the whole universe that he systematized, drawing from Eastern and Western sources.

Glockler, who studied medicine in Tubingen and Marburg and trained further as a pediatrician at the Community Hospital in Herdecke and at the Bochum University Pediatric Clinic, criticized the pharmaceutical industry for making hormones available worldwide in the same way vitamins and supplements were peddled. She said, in truth, the products are not necessary.

She said the age-old truth is that "every woman goes through menopause." She warned that hormonal treatment might be "bad if taken too long."

Glockler cited a 2004 study that showed the group that did not receive any hormones fared better than the one that did. The women who were administered the estrogen-progestin mix was found to be more prone to heart attacks, strokes and osteoporosis (brittle bones).

She said estrogen could be taken only briefly for crisis situations but not for the long term.

Culture-bound

Glockler, head of the medical section of the Goetheanum, the School of Spiritual Science in Dornach, Switzerland, also mentioned a 1994 study that looked at menopause in different cultures.

It seemed that the way women suffered during this period depended on cultures and lifestyles.

In Japan, there were no menopausal problems that there was not even a term for it in the language. Japanese women simply associated menopause with aging and they considered it a normal part of the process.

> The Japanese consider it a normal part of aging and do not even have a term for it in their language

ILLUSTRATION. LA MISTADES

But in Europe and the United States in the last two decades, women sought to stay young for as long as possible. They resorted to all sorts of remedies to slow aging.

The doctor did note that aging brought certain diseases related to menopause like depression, the No. 1 problem among women.

Glockler, author of the book "A Guide to Child Health," said lifestyles are related to the health of an aging population.

The age of 35 is the "cross zenith of the building up and stabilizing process of the body. Slowly, one loses bone mass." Men suffer less osteoporosis because they have more bone mass.

Get moving

Glockler suggested that to prevent bone problems in midlife and later, girls must be helped during the growing-up period to be as physically active as boys so they would develop more bone mass.

"The physical constitution needs movement, especially for the heart and circulatory system. By moving enough, you bring good feelings in your conscious lives. People need movement through dancing or going to the gym. In ancient cultures, movement existed. People were not reliant on cars," she noted.

"If we don't learn to move, movement being part of the body's intelligence, then we have lost the key to health, and the aging process starts," she warned.

The physician said a healthy human is not only made up of a working physiology and life forces but also of emotional and spiritual capacities. There are soul movements and tensions as much as body movements and tensions.

She said a person has an astrality—astrological forces taken from the stars. Astrality has to do with living consciously with one's emotions and working creatively with one's relationships.

Menopause could be a problem of astrality, she said, when a woman loses the system of movement. Emotional imbalance follows, and the main symptoms can be felt at the soul's level.

She discouraged dependence on artificial hormones, saying that the body learns its own natural work. At the same time, she assured women that gaining 4-7 kg of weight during menopause is normal because the fat cells actively produce hormones.

Thin women, she warned, suffer more from osteoporosis than fat women. "It's better to find other ways to show beauty other than by the kilo," Glockler quipped.

Exercising twice a day, even if only for 5 minutes each instance, allows the heart to nourish the whole body. When done religiously in half a year or so, the body is reeducated to produce natural hormones.

She also said menopausal women should eat less phosphates and acids from meat and shift to more vegetables to teach the body to become more alkalic than acidic. They should also have less coffee and tea and stay away from sweet juices.

Message

Though a person in the mid-40s and mid-50s might still feel fully engaged with life, Glockler said, "More and more the body will not be as it was before. One has passed a lifetime and at the same time there is another one in front of us. Unconsciously, this may cause depression, the feeling that one hasn't made good use of one's time or one didn't have a life."

But she added that even men feel a loss of physical power.

"All life is a spiritual and biological development... [and] aging becomes a maturation process so, when we die, we take our soul with us that has gone through a purification process," she said.

"The message of menopause," she summed up, "is to live better and better, to get rid of doubts, insecurities and fears, and wake up to life's meaning."

Int'l hygiene symposium slated in Manila

SOME 150 HEALTH AND HYGIENE professionals from seven countries will be in Manila on Feb. 9-10 to discuss development interventions at the 2nd International Health and Hygiene Symposium.

The symposium theme, "Better Health and Hygiene: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Hopes," makes strong reference to the United Nations' millennium development goals, which have included sanitation and hygiene in the plan of implementation, and the global community's acknowledgement of the importance of health and hygiene promotion as development interventions.

Hosted by Procter & Gamble Distributing Phils. Inc. (P&G), through its flagship brand Safeguard, the symposium is a follow-through to the first one held in Beijing, China, in 2002 then hosted by the Safeguard Research Institute of Family Health.

This international gathering is made more significant because Safeguard is marking its 40th anniversary since its introduction to the Philippine market in 1966. P&G and Safeguard have been forging successful partnerships with prestigious organizations like Unicef, DOH and the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists.

Expected to attend are key scientific and government thought leaders from China, Russia, Pakistan, Mexico, Singapore, US and the Philippines, the host country.

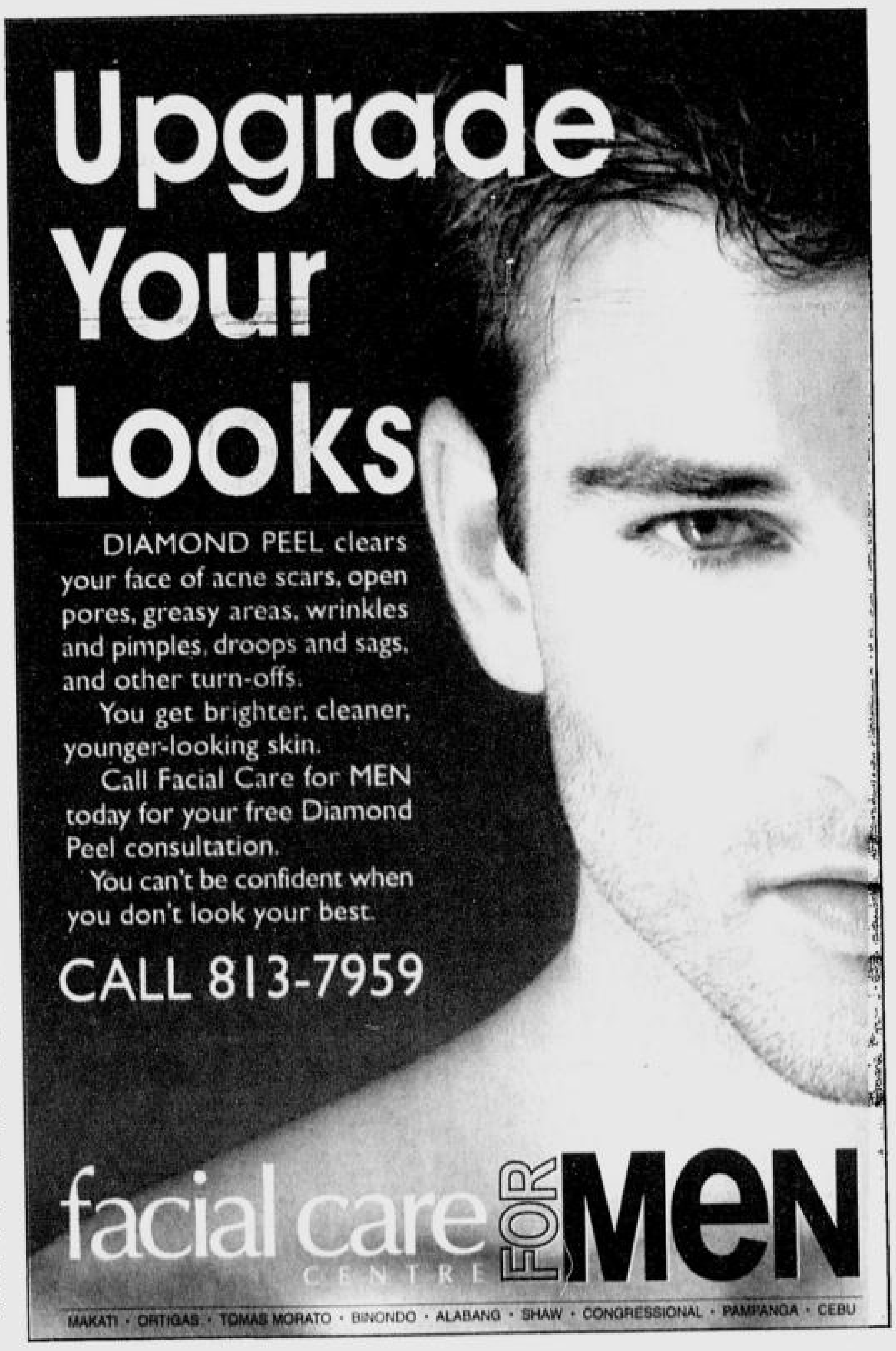
They will be addressed by Philippine Health Secretary Francisco T. Duque, who is expected to reiterate the global challenge of health and hygiene promotion, education and intervention to improve the health, well-being and economic productivity of the population.

The two-day symposium aims to share scientific date and knowledge on the importance and effectiveness of good hygiene practices in preventing and controlling diseases. Another objective is to exchange hygiene education and intervention program experience among participating countries, especially where public and private sector collaboration is concerned.

The World Health Organization reports that nearly 40 percent of the world's population (2.4 billion) have no access to personal hygiene measures, resulting to death from various diseases caused by inadequate sanitation.

The WHO supports moves to reduce hygiene-related illnesses by increasing access to sanitation and improving hygienic practices.

Symposium participants are expected to come up with proposed action plans for governments, nongovernment organizations, the scientific community and private sector to address the problem.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HIP party owls. Chopard's Cat Arambulo, DJ Manolet Dario, adorable Chinggay Andrada, wow Alex Gutierrez, southern gent JM Rodriguez, Embassy's hot Ivan Zalameda, young PR whiz GP Reyes and DJ Karl Ty

SUPERFLY'S Leo Po, super gal Marielle Santos, Rosanna Ocampo, Cris Yam, Alexi Alunan and Nikki Sarmiento toasting Johnnie Walker Gold

EMBASSY'S main man Erik Cua

HINDY Weber-Tantoco cheek-to-cheek with Astrud Crisologo

FASHION maven Lulu Tan Gan was one of the honorees.

MUSLIM-RIGHTS activist Yasmin Busran-Lao flew all the way from Marawi City to grace the Marie Claire launch party.

THREE'S definitely not a crowd: Raymond Gutierrez, Georgina Wilson and photographer Raymund Isaac

A happy 200th to the 'walking' man

IT WAS ONE GLITZY 200TH BIRTHDAY party for the man who started it all, **John Walker**, no less, the original Master Blender and founder of Johnnie Walker, "the world's best-selling brand of Scotch Whisky."

And what a bash it was, *palanggas*. Johnnie Walker Gold Label sponsored the whole shebang, simply called Holidaze, a "thank-you" party for the loyalists of the hippest nightspot, Embassy Cuisine and Super Club.

The ultra-chic happening was superbly hosted by no other than Embassy's main men, brilliant **Eric Cua**, cool **Jon Herrera** and, *naturellement*, my supah pal **Tim Yap**.

The strictly by-invitation-only affair got rolling with a sumptuous dinner and cocktails for Manille's A-listers: southern gentleman **JM Rodriguez**; multilingual **Ipe Cruz**; **Michelle** and **Tina Pamintuan**; **Mariko Jacinto**; international businessmen **Ricky Delgado**; and **Marcel Crespo**, with his ladylove, adorable **Celine Lopez**; **Cat Arambulo**; Century Tuna's **Lep P**; **Cris Yam**; **Ivan Zalameda** and Rene Barbier's **Fro Oliva**, plus so many others too popular to mention.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

Yes, *palanggas*, the exclusive VIP guest list was followed and the velvet rope was kept in place that night. Those who were not on the list just had to turn around and head for other nightspots in the city.

The party sizzled even more when the gorgeous, eye-catching Johnnie Walker Gold Label ladies started to serve the golden whisky, a truly fab blend. I was told that the best way to enjoy Gold Label "is to freeze it for 24 hours to release its light fruity flavors and true honey sweetness, as the whisky warms in the mouth, and also to serve it with bitter chocolate dessert, for a truly indulgent experience."

As a true whisky connoisseur would say: "To drink is to savor the richer pleasure of a truly golden whisky." Hey, though *moi* ain't a whisky drinker, I'll have to say amen to that, dahlings.

Women power

Check this out, *palanggas*. There's an awesome female force upon us. Filipino women have come a long way since Maria Clara's passive, docile days, dahling. Our gals have blossomed and are achieving their highest potential.

The hard-to-beat Summit Media, the country's top magazine publishing company, celebrates the modern Filipina and recognizes her need for a magazine that will help her as she continues to make important strides in her career, attitude and lifestyle. A couple of sleeps ago, Summit Media launched the most exciting women's title to hit our shores, Marie Claire Phils., the 26th edition of the cool, groundbreaking women's magazine that first appeared in France in 1954.

Marie Claire's formal launching was held at the chic new Rockwell tent, *palanggas*. The grand gala brought together women of substance and style who epitomize the ideals of Marie Claire.

The tons of invitees were greeted by a photo exhibit, "What Women See: Inspiring Images of Women by Women," with photos by renowned female photographers **Joan Bitagcol**, **Sara Black**, **Wowie Navarozza**, **Joanne Zapanta** and **Lyn Rillon**.

The magazine also honored the "25 Most Incredible Filipino Women," featured in their premiere issue. Some of the hot, awesome women honorees who graced the event were **Maria Ressa**, **Yasmin Busran Lao**, **Che Che Lazaro**, **Gaita Fores**, **Sr. Mary John Mananzan**, **Margie Holmes**, **Emily Abrera**, **Odette Alcantara**, **Gilda Cordero-Fernando**, **Queena Lee-Chua**, **Maritess Vitug**, **Impy Pilapil**, **Teresita Ang-See**, **Wilma Doesnt**, **Rissa Hontiveros** and **Socorro Ramos**. The late spitfire lady **Haydee Yorac** was represented by **Sandy Olfato**.

Another highlight was a fab fashion show featuring the gorgeous, eye-catching creations of today's top female designers **Hindy Weber-Tantoco**, **Lulu Tan Gan**, **Kate Torralba**, **Yvonne Quisumbing**, **Mitzi Quilendrino** and **Katrina Goulbourn**.

The fashion show featured French fashion, Filipino design, and the six must-have key trends, *palanggas*.

Okay, gals, if you're a woman who moves the world, rush out and grab a copy of Marie Claire magazine, with gorgeous A-caliber actress **Iza Calzado** on the cover. You'll learn what every girl wants to know, *palanggas*.

HEY, good-looking. Handsome Paolo Villavicencio with pixie beauty Nicole Hernandez

EDITORS. Manual's RJ Ledesma and Kat Holigores of Scoop Magazine

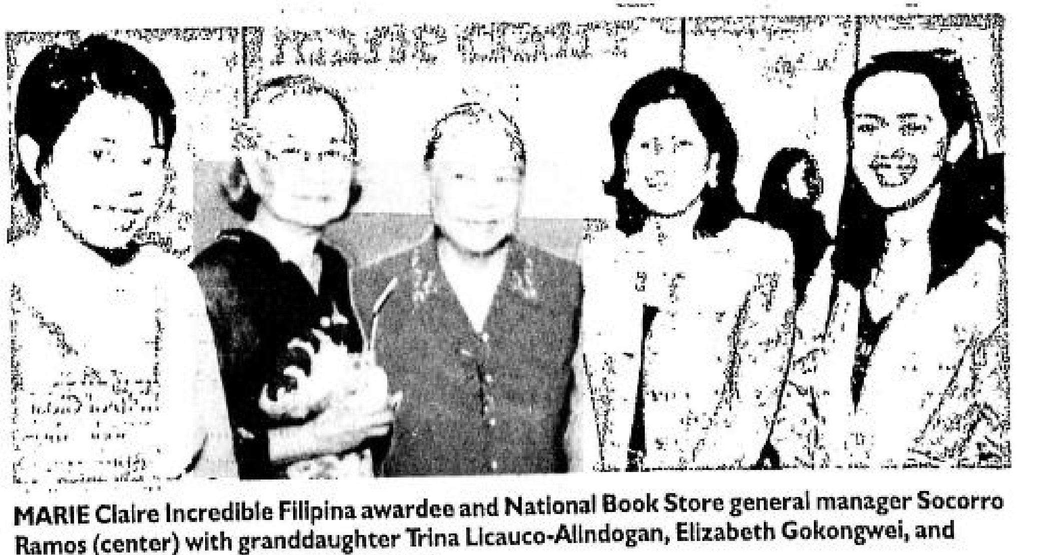
FORMER Pinay supermodels Patty Betita, Desiree Verdadero-Abesamis and Gem Padilla

PEACE activist Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel and Marie Claire managing editor Lara Parpan

POWER COUPLE. VMV's Laura Verallo and Juampi de Bertotto

MOD SQUAD. Karen Kunawicz, Wawi Navarozza, Katrina Lagman and Goo Simpliciano

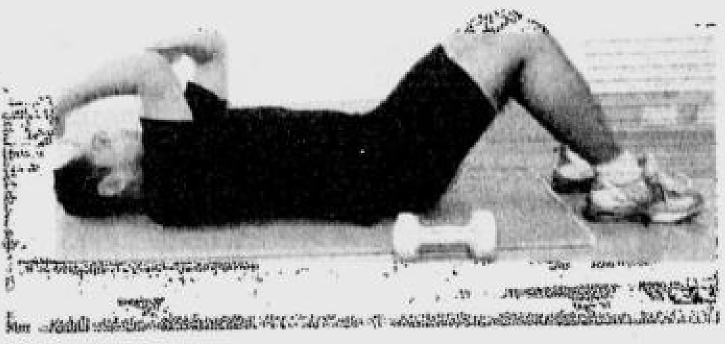
CHEERS! French Ambassador Gerard Chesnel, Marie Claire International editorial director Florence du Luart, Marie Claire Philippines editor in chief Myrza Sison and Daphne Oseña-Paez toast to Marie Claire.

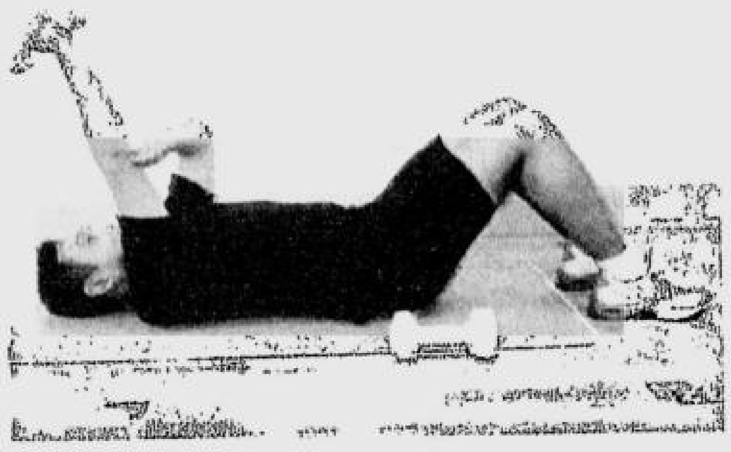


MARIE Claire Incredible Filipina awardee and National Book Store general manager Socorro Ramos (center) with granddaughter Trina Licauco-Alindogan, Elizabeth Gokongwei, and lawyers Fely Arroyo and Sandy Coronel

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Supine triceps extension





FIRMS THE MUSCLES in the back of the arms (triceps).

Equipment:

Dumbbells and an exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor.
2. Hold one dumbbell in the right hand. Bring it straight on top of you, bend the elbow and hold the right arm with the left hand to keep the shoulder steady.
3. The elbow of the working arm should be facing the ceiling. Starting and ending position should be with the elbow bent.
4. Concentrate on squeezing the triceps muscle as you straighten the elbow.
5. Slowly bend the elbow.

Performance tips:

1. Keep the elbow facing the ceiling.
2. Think of your triceps as a sponge; squeeze the water out of that muscle with each contraction.
3. Straighten the elbow to fully contract the triceps, but watch out for locking or jerking the elbow joint.
4. If your shoulder or elbow joints hurt while doing this exercise, stop.

Repetitions:

Do 12-15 repetitions per arm.

FAQs on abdominal exercises

Part 2

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

HERE ARE ANSWERS TO common questions about abdominal exercises (based on a lecture by Dr. Len Kravitz). For the complete report, go to http://www.unm.edu/~lkravitz/Article%20 folder/abdominal.html

What is the best exercise to train the abs?

There is no single abdominal exercise that challenges all the abdominal musculature, thus requiring the prescription of more than one single exercise.

Is it okay to use resistance with abdominal training?

Definitely, to create more tension. But only after mastering the proper technique without resistance.

Is there an ideal sequence in working the abdominal muscles?

No, because you should use a multi-stimuli approach.

How high should you go up in a crunch?

Crunch height is about 30°-45° depending on the length of the torso. Basically, it's the point at which the shoulder blades come off the floor.

Should you do ab exercises daily or three times a week?

Currently, there is no single study showing a greater benefit in doing the exercises daily or several times a week.

Should you pull the abs in while doing abdominal exercises?

Yes, to activate the transverses abdominis (TVA), which is the deepest abdominal muscle. It has horizontal fibers, which are the foundation for all the other fibers to attach to. The TVA wraps around to attach to the same connective tissue in the lower back area that the internal obliques attach to.

Pilates

Researcher Michele Olson presented the results of a Pilates study at the 2005 American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) convention. Here's an excerpt from the ACSM news release:

"In another phase of the study, the team measured abdominal muscle activity during key Pilates mat exercises. Participants performed five Pilates 'ab' exercises, then basic crunches for comparison.

"Results showed that the rectus abdominis muscle, which runs along the midsection of abdomen, was challenged similarly for most of the Pilates exercises. However, the Teaser exercise and Roll-Up challenged this abdominal muscle more than the crunch.

"The external obliques, the muscles on either side of the abdomen, were challenged to a greater degree by all of the Pilates exercises compared to the basic crunch.

"In particular, the Criss-Cross was the most effective for the external obliques. However, the Teaser exercise also activated the hip flexors to a marked degree. Thus, this exercise may be best reserved for very advanced individuals or athletes."

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

Shift to parliamentary form scary

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

THE HUMAN MIND HAS A tendency, when confronted with a problem that needs a solution, to mistake the effect for the cause.

I am reminded of this faulty reasoning by those long-winded discussions about the need to change our present presidential form of government to a parliamentary one following some foreign model. It is argued that the presidential form is no longer working for us, that it keeps us from progressing. The proponents say almost all economically advanced countries have adopted the parliamentary form.

But are we ready for such a radical change?

In the Philippines, whenever a government agency is inefficient or full of anomalies, it is dissolved, replaced with a new agency with a different name.

However, most of the people in the defunct agency are retained. By changing the structure and name of the agency, it is assumed the quality of service will improve and the problem solved.

Same dog

For example, people didn't like the Philippine Constabulary. It was deemed corrupt and inefficient. The solution was to set up another agency, the Philippine National Police. But since the people from the Philippine Constabulary were appointed to the new agency, it became obvious after a while that nothing really changed. The same dog simply got a different name.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue was deemed to be another graft-ridden agency. So there was a proposal to dissolve it and create a new agency to solve the problem. Fortunately, thinking people intervened and the plan was aborted.

Shakespeare said, "A rose by any name will smell just as sweet." By the same token, "A skunk by any name will stink just the same!"

I am really scared by all these talks about amending the Philippine Constitution and shifting from the presidential to the parliamentary form of government. As a people, we simply are not ready for such a shift. We do not have the political culture and tradition and political maturity to make such a system work.

A political system, like language, cannot be imposed from the outside. It must be the product of the history, culture and values of the people.

This is why American-style democracy, imposed on Asian Philippines, does not work here, although we like to believe it does. Philippine-style democracy has very little similarity with American democracy. We have all the external features of democracy, all right, but not the traditions, way of thinking, culture and discipline that make it work in the United States. For one thing, we can't even start or finish anything on time in this country. Never mind a host of other differences!

We often mistake form for substance, the accidental for the essential, the external for the internal. We brag about having free and democratic elections. But do we consider the rampant cheating and even killing that happen every election? Is that how democracy works?

We pride ourselves in having freedom of the press, but how much of media is truly independent? How much of media is owned by people with vested interests? We pride ourselves in having religious freedom, but how many politicians will risk opposing the church, or vote against its self-interest?

Not the problem

Let's not kid ourselves. The form or structure of the government is not our problem. We are barking at the wrong tree. We are putting the cart before the horse. We are mistaking the effect for the cause.

The basic problems of our people are their consciousness and mental attitude, not the structure of government.

Even if we changed the form of government, nothing will change, unless we can change the consciousness of our people, beginning with our political leaders and those working in government. We need not change the consciousness of everyone. That's impossible. If we can succeed in changing a critical mass, everything else will follow.

Unless we can do this, let us not mess around for the time being with our political system or structure of government, at least not within the next 10 years. Let's wait for a strong, honest and wise leader who will truly love his/her country and will serve it selflessly. Changing the form of government will not usher in a new era of progress for this country.

Let us not commit the mistake of the proud cock in Aesop's fable who was convinced it was his crowing that made the sun rise.

To paraphrase another Shakespearean line, "It is not in our form of government, Dear Joe, but in ourselves, that we are underlings."

Cagayan de Oro residents interested in attending my "Basic ESP and Intuition Development" seminar on Feb. 4-5, please contact Melissa Robante at 0917-7120253. Pampanga residents interested in "Soulmates, Karma and Reincarnation" seminar, Feb. 11, at Mimosa, Clark Field, Angeles City, contact Riza Lim at 0917-8436043.

> A political system must be the product of the history, culture and values of the people

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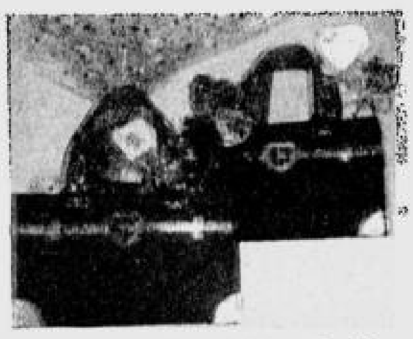
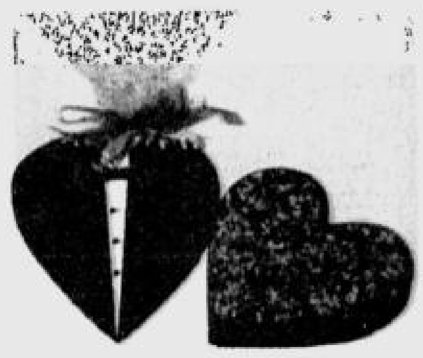
Healthy Valentine gift packs

HIS/HER Healthy Young Love



1,000 Healthy Hugs & Kisses for him and her



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For example, 1,000 Healthy Hugs & Kisses is filled with an assortment of products that promote relaxation, heart health and guiltless indulgence.

Nlite Valentine packages contain a mix of healthy treats such as sugar-free chocolate bars, chocolate chip cookies, chocolate fudge chews, oatmeal raisin cookies, pistachio and almond nuts, as well as stress-relief aids such as aromatherapy eye pillows, massage oils, scented candles, incense, oil burners, tea and even dream catchers.

The health-giving products are artfully packed, like the ultra-hip and stylish Valentine backpack-box of His/Her Healthy Young Love, or the whimsical tuxedo heart box of Chocolat de Amour.

Each gift pack includes information on the healthful benefits of its contents.

All packages can be price-customized and redesigned to fit your budget.

Nlite gifts are products of Ihealth, 85A West Capitol Drive, Bo. Kapitolyo, Pasig. Call 6366804 or fax 6366805. Visit www.ihealthcircle.com

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Last day for 'I love you' entries

DREAM UP THE MOST ROMANTIC and heart-melting words to express your love for your significant other and they could just give you a chance to be on live television.

Today is the last day for sending your most heartfelt declarations of affection.

Mail to Visions and Expressions, Room 303, Townes Building, Pasay Road, Makati City; e-mail CloseUp.Lovapalooza@unilever.com or visions@i-manila.com.ph; or text 0920-9703221.

Your love declaration can be one of 16 entries from all over the Philippines that will be featured at Close-Up's Lovapalooza on Feb. 11.

The event will be held simultaneously in four venues—Roxas Boulevard Baywalk in Manila, Bayanihan Park MacArthur Highway in Angeles City, FGU Ayala Business Park in Cebu, and Matina Town Square in Davao. Four couples in each area will get the chance to declare their love on TV.

This may be your once-in-a-lifetime chance to let everyone know just how sweet your love can be, with the help of Close-Up!

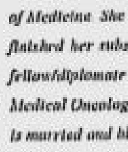
So let those loving feelings flow and inspire you to make your grandest expression of love yet. Send it in, cross your fingers; and pucker up for your sweetest kiss as Close-Up makes the romance happen in Lovapalooza 2006.

MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve

Take Charge Doc!

What are the most common cancers of Filipinos today?

In the Philippines, cancer is the third leading cause of morbidity and mortality after communicable and cardiovascular diseases. It can occur at any age but more frequently with advancing age. Seventy five percent (75%) of all cancers occur after the age of 50 and about 3% occurs at age 14 years and below. It is now estimated that 1 out 1000 Filipinos has cancer. Based on the 2005 Philippine Cancer Facts and Estimates, the leading cancer sites for both sexes are lung, breast, colon/rectum, liver, cervix uteri, prostate, leukemia, stomach and thyroid. For males, the 5 most common cancer sites are lung, liver, colon/rectum, prostate and stomach. On the other hand, the most common cancer sites among women are the breast, cervix uteri, lung, colon/rectum and ovary. The increasing incidence of lung cancer is related to the growing number of smokers among Filipinos. Data from the same cancer registries indicated that the top three mortality cancer sites in males were lung, liver and leukemia, and among females were breast, lung and cervix uteri. Every year, the number of cancer-related deaths increases by thousands due to the low level of cancer awareness. Therefore, everyone should understand the importance of regular medical check-ups as a way to detect cancer early on since at least a third of all cancers can be cured if detected early and most cancers are actually preventable with proper healthy lifestyle.



This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our medical service provider at Cagayan De Oro Medical Center in Cagayan De Oro City, Dr. Reyna Christy Aparece-Abas. Dra. Abas is specializes in IM-Oncology. She obtained her medical degree at Dr. Jose P. Rizal College of Medicine. She took her residency training for Internal Medicine in 2000 and finished her subspecialty training for Oncology in 2004 at UP-PGH. She is a fellow/diplomate of the Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine Society of Medical Oncology and a member of Misamis Oriental Medical Society. Dr. Abas is married and blessed with one child.

MEDICard members may visit her at Cagayan De Oro Medical Center Mondays thru Fridays from 1pm-5pm

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

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A four-day detox program

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

ONE HOUSEWIFE COULDN'T start her day without a cup of coffee. She needed the caffeine rush, or so she claimed, to keep her going. Averaging seven cups a day, she realized it was time to straighten herself out.

A businessman was always too busy to mind his diet. Entertaining clients often took its toll. He became overweight and a borderline alcoholic. When his weight hit 190 lbs., he realized he had to take control of his life.

A career woman and single parent was a highly accomplished executive, spending a lot of time working to advance in her profession. When she experienced constipation frequently, she became seriously concerned.

These are just some true-to-life experiences of real people who were on the road to illness but decided to make a real lifestyle turnaround.

One step forward

It is said before any real change in life can happen, it must begin in the mind. When you say to yourself "I wish to live longer and better," it's time to make a change without hesitation.

- Read up on health, particularly preventive medicine (if you have no health condition) or disease management (if you are facing a health challenge).
- Consult your physician.
- Study your options, considering both Western and Eastern approaches to better health.
- Enrol in a detoxification program.

Internal house cleaning

It isn't only homes that need general cleaning. The body, the house your spirit lives in, also needs special cleaning.

At the Farm at San Benito in Lipa, Batangas, 10-ha of lush forest, landscaped gardens and well-appointed villas, the serious health enthusiast is in wellness heaven. Conceptualized and built by Eckard and Perla Rempe, it has since garnered prestigious awards, including the Spa Asia Crystal and Baccarat Awards.

There are five-, seven-, 14- and 21-day detox programs to suit your needs. The regimens involve body, mind and spirit.

A typical four-day mini-detox program is designed for people in a hurry.

Day one

As you check in, the resident manager will give you your personalized program.

Lunch: At 85/15 restaurant (aptly called because diners can have an 85-percent raw and 15-percent cooked meal) you get a heap of organic vegetables with a choice of veggie dressings. One is allowed a second helping of the same salad.

Clinic briefing: Resident doctors cheerfully explain your program point by point. Body measurements, including weight, are taken. A blood analysis follows, with the doctor clearly pointing out your blood profile and where there is a need for improvement. Of course, the idea behind this is to do a comparative study of before and after.

You get your ration of vitamins. Every day of your program is carefully packed with activities with enough rest periods in between.

In the late afternoon you get your first massage under the sky or early evening under the stars.

Dinner: Organic salad and juice. Evening entertainment is a movie at the library by a scenic pond. Though early bedtime is not imposed, the serenity of the place will have you in bed by 9 p.m.

Day two

You move from the spa for your reflexology Thai massage or salt bath to the yoga room or amphitheater for an inspirational talk by a life coach. A short lecture and video presentation by a doctor will open your eyes to the urgency and necessity to cleanse your body via the colon as well as the value of eating "live" foods rich in enzymes and nutrients, like vegetables and fruits, for optimum health. No solid foods are served. You get green juice throughout the day followed by a cleansing tea mixed with psyllium fiber and virgin coco oil. Surprisingly, you don't get an attack of hunger that will have you running to the nearest fast-food joint.

Day three

The juicing kicks in and you feel light and energized. This day, the colon is cleansed via colema and colonics treatments using the latest equipment that gently cleans you thoroughly. Therapists are courteous and well-trained to handle your every concern. Break time lets you take a stroll around the gardens, swim at the waterfalls, read a book or simply pray and meditate. The day ends with another spa treatment.

Day four

Your fast is broken with a welcome treat—breakfast! You eat the most delicious vegetarian meal ever. Then it's off to the colonics room for your last cleansing. This is followed by a lunch buffet of nutritious foods that are coconut- and vegetable-based whipped up by chef Felix Schoener.

Then a final visit to the clinic. The result? Easily 2-3 inches off your waist and you weigh 4-6 pounds less.

Repeat performance

A detox should be experienced at least once in a lifetime by the curious. For the health enthusiast, ideally it should be a semi-annual procedure. You look visibly different after a detox because your skin is more radiant, your disposition calmer and your outlook brighter than ever.

Love and light!

Contact the Farm at San Benito at 7508888 (Marketing Office, Mandarin Oriental Hotel).

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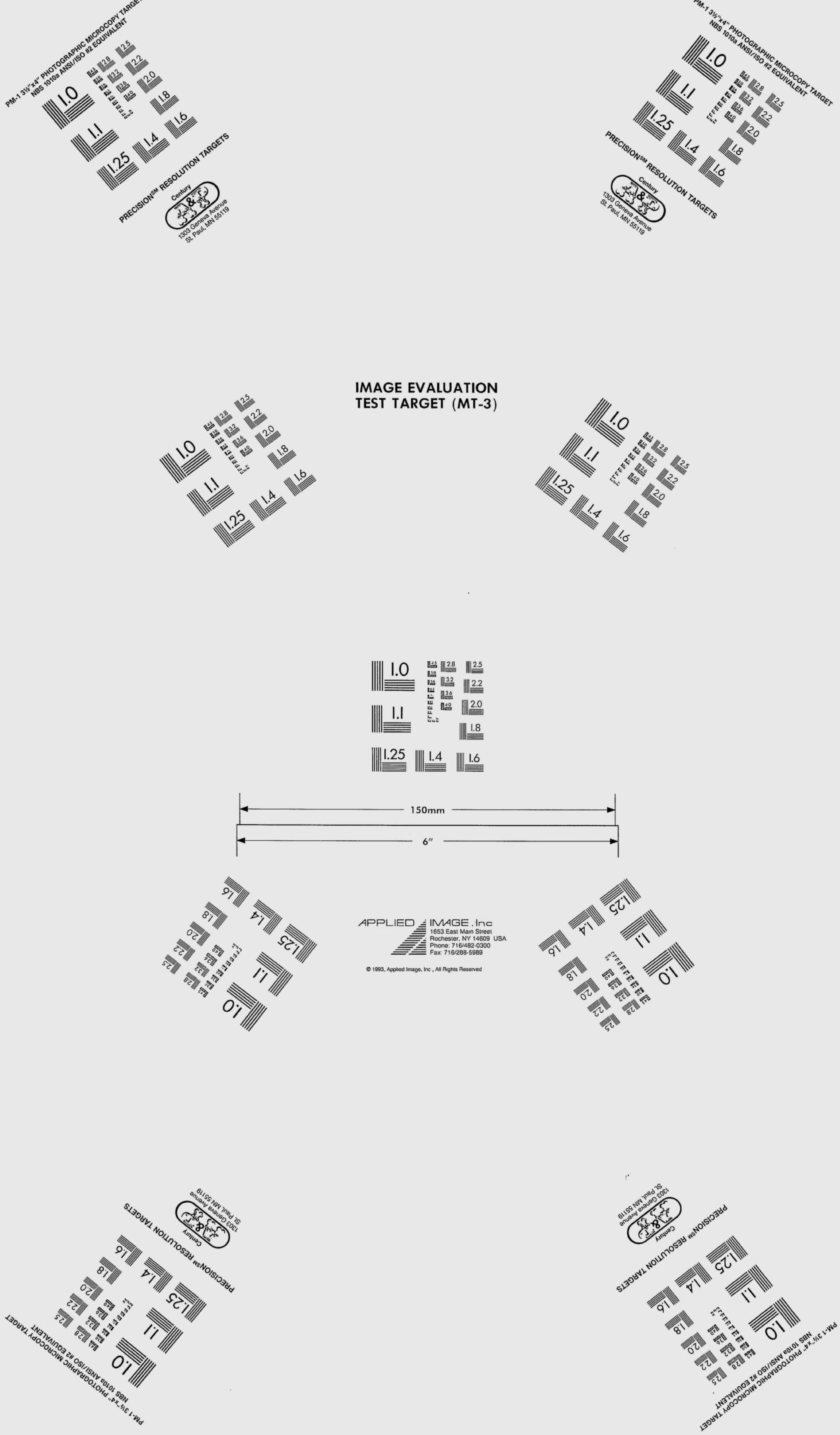

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